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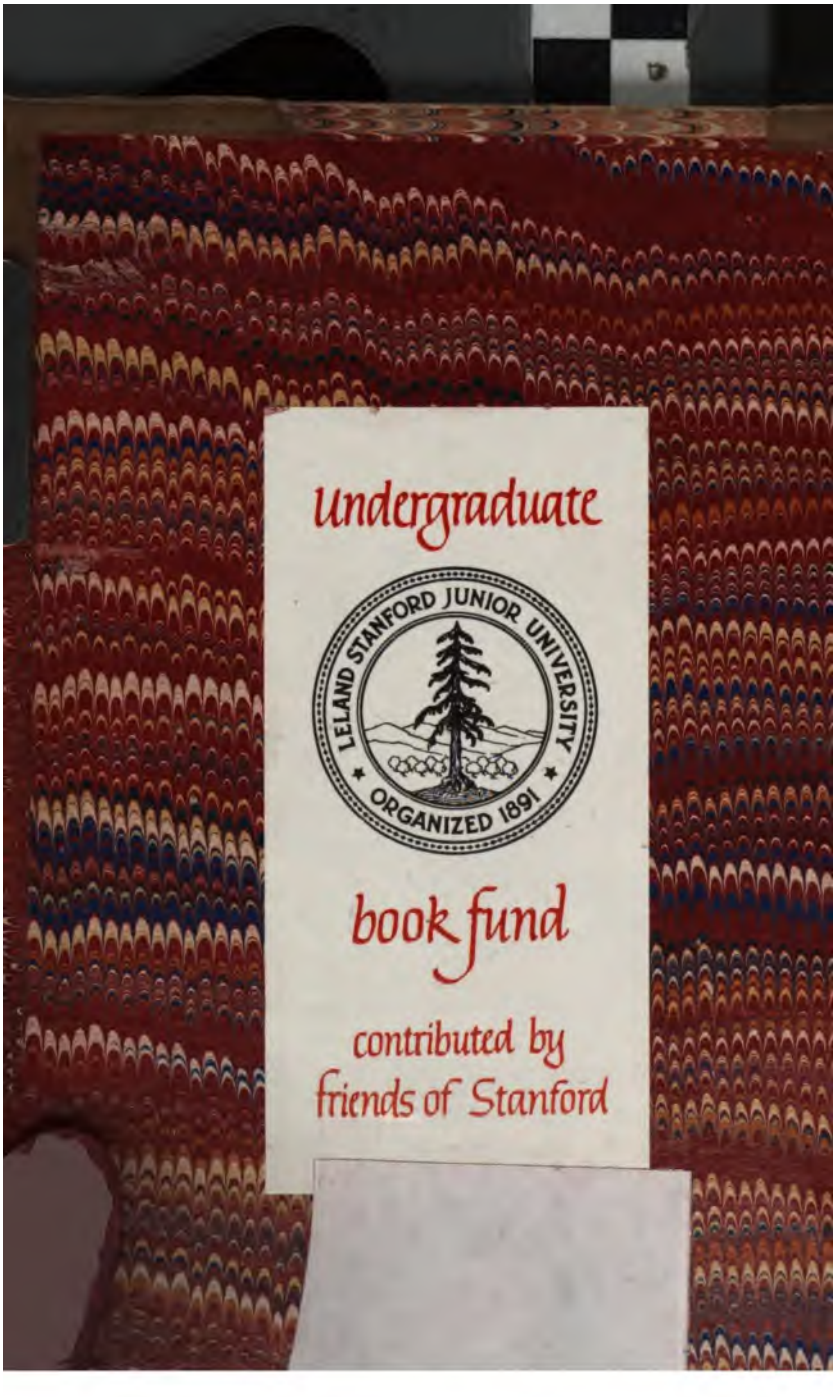
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BANCROFT'S HISTORY

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

CENTENARY EDITION.

VOL. V.



HISTORY

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

FROM

THE DISCOVERY OF THE CONTINENT

BY

GEORGE BANCROFT.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

THOROUGHLY REVISED EDITION.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.
1876.



B99874

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THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

EPOCH THIRD CONTINUED.

AMERICA DECLARES ITSELF INDEPENDENT.

1774–1776.



AMERICA DECLARES ITSELF INDEPENDENT.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS IN MIDSUMMER, 1775.

JUNE 17—JULY, 1775.

IDLE refugees in Boston, and even candid British officers, condemned Howe's attack on the New England lines as a needless exposure of his troops to carnage. By landing at the Charlestown isthmus, they said, he should have cooped the rebels within the peninsula; or by aid of a musket proof gunboat he should have dislodged the party near the Mystic; and, even at the last, by concentrating his force at the rail-fence, he might have taken Prescott in the rear. During the evening and night after the battle, the air trembled with the groans of the wounded, as they were borne over the Charles and through the streets of Boston to hospitals, where they were to waste away from the summer heat and the scarcity of proper food. The fifth regiment suffered most; the eighteenth and the fifty-ninth, which had long been very weak, were utterly ruined; and, to the end of the war, the courage of the insurgents in this battle of the people, and their skill as marksmen, never wore out of mind. The loss of officers was observed to be disproportionately great; and the gloom in the quarters of the British was deepened by the reflection that they had fought not against an enemy, but against their fellow-subjects and kindred; not for the promotion of civil or religious freedom, but for the supremacy of one part of the empire over another. Those who, like Abercrombie, died of their wounds, wanted

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consolation in their last hour; for they had no hope that posterity would mark their graves or cherish their memory.

1775. June 17. On the day of the battle, the continental congress elected its four major-generals. From deference to Massachusetts, the first of these was Artemas Ward. Notwithstanding his ill-health, he answered: "I always have been, and am still ready to devote my life in attempting to deliver my native country."

The American people with ingenuous confidence assumed that Charles Lee — the son of an English officer, trained up from boyhood for the army — was, as he represented himself, well versed in the science of war, a soldier of ability and large experience, and their friend from conviction of the equity of their cause. In England, he was better understood. "From what I know of him," wrote Sir Joseph Yorke, then British minister at the Hague, "he is the worst present which could be made to any army." He left the standard of his king, because he saw "no chance of being provided for at home," and, as an adventurer, sought "employment in any part of the world." Clinging to England all the while, and holding it "wretchedness itself not to be able to herd with the class of men to which he had been accustomed from his infancy," he was continually craving intimate relations with British general officers and his old associates. He looked upon the Americans as "bad company," and unworthy of independence, and he would willingly have become conspicuous as the instrument to lead them back to their allegiance; but, whatever purpose for evil or for good rose in his mind, the eddies of his whims were sure to disturb its course. No position was too high for his conceit; yet he could not steadily pursue intrigues to supplant his superiors. He wrote with vivacity and sometimes with epigrammatic terseness, but never with warmth; for he had no sincerity, and he loved neither man nor woman. He was subject to "spleen and gloomy moods;" excitable almost to madness, alike violent and versatile. He passed for a brave man, but he wanted presence of mind, and in sudden danger he quailed. His mobility, though sometimes mistaken for activity, only disguised his

inefficiency. He was poor in council; prodigal of censure; downcast in disaster; after success, claiming honor not his own; apt only to cavil and perplex. He professed to be a free-thinker, after the type of his century; but he had only learned of scoffers to deny "the God of the Jews," curse the clergy, and hate orthodox dissenters. Ill-mannered, a great sloven, wretchedly profane, always with dogs about him, his numerous eccentricities were neither exaggerations nor caricatures of any thing American, and in their excess disclosed a morbid mind. Having no fellow-feeling with the common people, he would have preferred a country of slaves under a lenient master to a democratic government. His sordid soul had no passion so strong as covetousness; in affluence, he thought his income "miserably scanty," and he was always seeking to escape spending money even on himself. Claiming to "have passed through the higher military ranks in some of the most respectable services of Europe, and to be a major-general of five years' standing," he had waited upon congress with the thought of being 1775. June 17. chosen commander in chief. Before he would consent to take rank after Ward, whom he despised, he exacted a promise of indemnity on renouncing his British half pay; and, at the moment of accepting employment from a body which was looking to France for sympathy, he assured his king of his readiness to serve against the natural hereditary enemies of England with the utmost alacrity and zeal. He often regretted having hazarded his "all" in the American cause. Such was the man who, in the probable event of Ward's early resignation, would stand next in command to Washington.

New York had been asked to propose the third major-general: she had more than one citizen of superior military talent; but her provincial congress, limiting the choice to those who possessed "the gifts of fortune," selected Philip Schuyler. Montgomery hesitated, saying: "His consequence in the province makes him a fit subject for an important trust; but has he strong nerves? I could wish that point well ascertained with respect to any man so employed." Doubts existed in congress, and the vote for him

was not unanimous. Born to opulence, accustomed to ease, of a generous, open, and unsuspicious nature, infirm in health, choleric and querulous, Schuyler was ill suited to control undisciplined levies of turbulent freemen, or penetrate the wiles of a crafty foe; but he had personal integrity, social consideration, superiority to envy, and patriotism so sincere that he zealously used his credit, influence, and connections to bring out the resources of his native province.

For the fourth major-general, the choice fell upon Israel Putnam, of Connecticut. Wooster, as well as Spencer, of the same colony, stood before him in age and rank, and equalled him in love of country and intrepidity; but the skirmish at Noddle's Island had been heralded as a great victory, and the ballot in his favor is recorded as unanimous. Of Massachusetts by birth, at the age of thirty-seven he began his career in war with the commission from Connecticut of a second lieutenant, and his service had been chiefly as a ranger. He was famous for deeds of personal prowess; his approved courage, adventurous life, and ardent support of the rights of the colonies, had made his house the resort of the patriots of his neighborhood, himself their military oracle; but at fifty-seven he was too old to be taken from his farm to command a division of an army.

Next to these came Horatio Gates, as adjutant-general with the rank of brigadier. He was shallow, vain, and timorous, and of little administrative ability. His ease of manner and comparatively large experience enabled him to render service in bringing the incoherent regiments of novices into order; but from the first he was restless for high promotion, without possessing any one of the qualities requisite in a leader.

The continent took up arms, with only one general officer who drew to himself the trust and love of the country; with not one of the five next below him fit to give him efficient aid, still less to succeed to his place.

1775. June. On the twenty-first of June, Thomas Jefferson, then thirty years of age, entered congress, preceded by a brilliant reputation as an elegant writer and a courageous

and far-sighted statesman. The next day brought tidings of the Charlestown battle. In consolation for Warren's death, Patrick Henry exclaimed: "A breach on our affections was needed to rouse the country to action." Congress proceeded at once to the election of eight brigadiers, of whom all but one were from New England. The first was Seth Pomeroy, a gunsmith of Northampton, the warm-hearted veteran of two wars; but he was seventy years old, and, on perceiving some distrust of his capacity, he retired from the camp before receiving his commission. The second was Richard Montgomery, of New York, seventh from Washington in rank, next to him in merit; an Irishman by birth, well informed as a statesman, faultless in private life, a patriot from the heart. He was followed by David Wooster, of Connecticut, an upright old man of sixty-five, frugal of his means, but lavish of his life; William Heath, of Roxbury, Massachusetts, a patriot farmer, who held high rank in the train-bands and had read books on the military art, vain, honest, and incompetent; Joseph Spencer, of Connecticut, a man past sixty, a most respectable citizen, but, from inexperience, not qualified for councils of war; John Thomas, a physician, of Kingston, Massachusetts, the best general officer of that colony; and John Sullivan, a lawyer of New Hampshire, always ready to act, but not always thoughtful of what he undertook; not free from defects and foibles; tinctured with vanity and eager to be popular; enterprising, spirited, and able. The last was Nathaniel Greene, of Rhode Island, who, after Washington, had no superior in natural resources, unless it were Montgomery.

At a farewell supper, the members of congress all rose, as they drank a health to "the commander in chief of the American army;" to his thanks they listened in stillness, for the sense of the difficulties which lay before him suppressed every festal cheer. 1775. June.

"A kind of destiny has thrown me upon this service:" thus Washington announced "the cutting stroke of his departure" to his wife, whose miniature he always wore on his breast from the day of his marriage to his death. On the twenty-third of June, a day after congress had heard

the first rumors of the battle at Charlestown, he was escorted out of Philadelphia by the Massachusetts delegates and many others, with music, officers of militia, and a cavalcade of light-horse in uniform. "I, poor creature," said John Adams, as he returned from this "pride and pomp of war," "I, worn out with scribbling for my bread and my liberty, low in spirits and weak in health, must leave others to wear the laurels which I have sown; others to eat the bread which I have earned." To his brother, Washington wrote confidingly: "I bid adieu to every kind of domestic ease, and embark on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and in which perhaps no safe harbor is to be found." He went forth not to eat the bread, still less to wear the honors of others, but to hazard fame and life in the command of an army which had neither experienced officers, nor discipline, nor permanency, nor proper arms, nor ammunition, nor funds for its support; encouraged only by the hope that, by self-sacrifice, he might unbar the gates of light for mankind.

1775. June. On Sunday the twenty-fifth, all New York was in motion. Tryon, the royal governor, who had arrived the day before, was to land from the harbor; and Washington, accompanied by Lee and Schuyler, under the escort of the Philadelphia light-horse, was known to have reached Newark. As the colony of New York had been enjoined by the general congress to respect the king's government, the governor and the general were both entitled to be received with public honors; but the people intervened to mark the distinction. On the news that Washington was to cross the Hudson, the bells were rung, the militia paraded in their gayest trim, and at four o'clock in the afternoon the commander in chief, dressed in a uniform of blue, was received at Lispenard's by the mass of the inhabitants. Drawn in an open carriage by a pair of white horses, he was escorted into the city by nine companies of infantry; while multitudes, of all ages and both sexes, bent their eyes on him from the house-tops, the windows, and the streets. Night had fallen before Tryon landed. Met by a company which he himself had commissioned, and by a few of the magistrates in military costume, he was attended

noiselessly to a house in Broadway. He had expected to find the royalists in the undisputed ascendant; and he saw himself left almost alone, an object of suspicion, liable at any moment to arrest. The false informers of the ministry excused themselves by the suddenness of the "change of measures and sentiments;" and frankly owned that the province would fall behind none in opposition to the king and parliament. Amazed and dejected, Tryon masked his designs under an air of unconcern, and overflowed with bland professions. Washington, who penetrated his insincerity, and had no scruple about the propriety of seizing him, directed Schuyler to keep a watchful eye on his movements, and wrote a warning to congress; but Schuyler, lulled by words of mildness which concealed the most wary and malignant activity, reported that Tryon "would create no trouble."

On the twenty-sixth, the provincial congress of New York, in their address to Washington, "from whose abilities and virtue they were taught to expect security and peace," declared an accommodation with the mother country to be the fondest wish of each American soul, in the fullest assurance that, upon such an accommodation, he would cheerfully resign his trust, and become once more a citizen. "When we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen," answered Washington for himself and his colleagues; but, having once drawn the sword, he postponed the thought of private life to the "establishment of American liberty on the most firm and solid foundations." 1775. June.

On the next day, the New York congress produced its plan of accommodation. It insisted on the repeal of obnoxious acts, the undisturbed exercise by the respective colonies of the powers of internal legislation and taxation, and the free enjoyment of the rights of conscience; it conceded to Great Britain the power to regulate the trade of the whole empire; and, on proper requisitions, promised assistance in the general defence, either from the colonies severally, or through a continental congress under a president appointed by the crown. Transmitting their demands to their delegates, they added: "Use every effort for compromising this unhappy quarrel; so that, if our well-meant

endeavors shall fail of effect, we may stand unreproachable by our own consciences in the last solemn appeal to the God of battles." The spirit of the colony was in harmony with the rest of the continent; but here too, as everywhere else, preparations for resistance had been deferred; no more than four barrels of powder could be found in the city.

While Washington was borne toward Cambridge on the affectionate confidence of the people, congress, which had as yet supported its commander in chief with nothing beyond a commission, was indulging a hope, by one campaign, to dispose the British government to treaty. How to find the ways and means for such a temporary resistance was their great difficulty. They represented a fertile and wealthy continent; but, even if commerce had not ceased, they possessed no power to lay taxes of any kind. Necessity led, therefore, to the most disastrous of all financial measures; though the country was already languishing under the depreciating paper money of the several colonies, continental bills of credit to the amount of two millions of dollars were authorized, and "the twelve confederated colonies" were pledged for their redemption.

A code for the government of the continental army was adopted. Two more companies of riflemen were asked of Pennsylvania, that the eight from that colony might form a battalion. The Green Mountain Boys, if they would but serve, were allowed the choice of their own officers; and as Carleton "was making preparations to invade the colonies, and was instigating the Indian nations to take up the hatchet against them," Schuyler, who was directed to repair to Ticonderoga and Crown Point, received authority to take possession of St. John's, Montreal, and any other parts of Canada. To the Indians, agents were sent with presents and speeches, "to prevent their taking any part in the commotions." Alliances with them were forbidden, except where some emissary of the ministry should have concerted with them acts of hostility or an offensive league.

1775. July. On the sixth of July, congress set forth the causes and necessity of taking up arms. After recapitulating

the wrongs of America, they asked, in words which Edmund Burke ridiculed as the "nonsense" of men wholly ignorant of the state of parties in England: "Why should we enumerate our injuries in detail? By one statute it is declared that parliament can of right make laws to bind us in all cases whatsoever. What is to defend us against so unlimited a power? Not a single man of those who assume it is chosen by us; and an American revenue would lighten their own burdens in proportion as they increase ours." Lord North's proposal for conciliation they condemned as insidiously designed to divide the colonies, and leave them nothing but "the indulgence of raising the prescribed tribute in their own mode." After enumerating the hostile acts at Lexington and Concord, Boston, Charlestown, and other places, the seizure of ships, the intercepting of provisions, the attempts to imbody Canadians, Indians, and insurgent slaves, they closed their statement in words of their new member, Jefferson: "These colonies now feel the complicated calamities of fire, sword, and famine. We are reduced to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to irritated ministers, or resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery. Our cause is just, our union is perfect, our internal resources are great, and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attainable. Before God and the world, we declare that the arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume we will employ for the preservation of our liberties; being, with one mind, resolved to die free men rather than live slaves. We have not raised armies with designs of separating from Great Britain and establishing independent states. Necessity has not yet driven us into that desperate measure. We exhibit to mankind the spectacle of a people attacked by unprovoked enemies, without any imputation or even suspicion of offence. In our own native land, in defence of the freedom that is our birthright, for the protection of our property against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms. We shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all

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danger of their being renewed shall be removed, and not before."

So firm a declaration should have been followed by assuming powers of government, opening the ports to every nation, holding the king's officers as hostages, and modelling a general constitution. Such was the counsel of John Adams. Franklin knew that there was no longer a time to negotiate or entreat; and to Strahan, the go-between through whom he had formerly communicated with Lord North, he wrote, on the fifth of July: "You are a member of parliament, and one of that majority which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns and murder our people. Look upon your hands! they are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends; you are now my enemy, and I am yours." But still Franklin did not attempt to overrule or defy the scruples of his colleagues.

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The second petition to the king, drafted by Dickinson, put forward Duane's proposal for a negotiation, to be preceded by a truce. The colonies, by refusing to treat separately and offering to treat jointly, announced their union, which thus preceded their independence. Yet, as the king would not receive a document from congress, the petition was signed by the members individually. Dickinson, confident of success, was proud of his work. "There is but one word in it which I wish altered," said he, "and that is 'congress.'" "It is the only word I wish should remain," answered Harrison, of Virginia.

Having thus owned the continuing sovereignty of the king, before whom they presented themselves as bedemen, the United Colonies, as a nation dealing with a nation, a people speaking to a people, addressed the inhabitants of Great Britain. From English institutions they had derived the principles for which they had taken up arms, and their visions of future greatness were blended with their pride as men of English descent. They spoke, therefore, to Englishmen as to countrymen and brothers, recapitulating their griefs, and plainly setting forth that the repeal of the laws of which they complained must go before the disband-

ing of their army, or the renewal of commercial intercourse.

On the same day, thanks were addressed to the lord mayor, aldermen, and livery of London, for their unsolicited sympathy. "North America," it was further said, "wishes most ardently for a lasting connection with Great Britain on terms of just and equal liberty; less than which generous minds will not offer, nor brave and free ones receive."

The desire for harmony was so intense that Richard Penn, a proprietary of Pennsylvania and recently its governor, a most loyal Englishman, bound by the strongest motives of affection and interest to avert American independence, was selected to bear the second petition to the throne. He assumed the trust with alacrity, and on the twelfth of July embarked on his mission. The hope of success grew out of the readiness of the Americans, on the condition of exemption from parliamentary taxation, to bear the restraints on their trade; or, as an alternative, to purchase a freedom of trade like that of Scotland, by taxing themselves towards the payment of the national debt. 1775. July.

From the complacency engendered by delusive confidence, congress was recalled to the necessities of the moment by a letter from Washington.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE ARMY ROUND BOSTON.

JULY, 1775.

ON Monday the third of July, Washington rode forth from his quarters at Cambridge, numerously attended, and, under an elm-tree on the common, assumed command of the continental army. A favorable opinion had gone before him; but his presence was greater than his fame. Of his companions, Mifflin charmed by his activity, spirit, and obliging behavior; the intelligence, culture, and manners of Reed engaged esteem; Lee personally excited disgust, but the general persuasion of his experience in the art of war, and of his sincerity in professing a zealous attachment to "the cause of mankind," assured him the respect of Washington and gratitude from the congress in Massachusetts. Gates, who arrived within a week, gained friends by his affability, and his usefulness in a subordinate station.

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From the first moment of his coming, the commander in chief took the hearts of all about him, and of all New England; though he himself was unused to the ways of its people, whose character he never could thoroughly understand. The provincial congress at Watertown welcomed him in a cordial address. From Philadelphia, Hancock expressed the wish to serve under him; Greene and the Rhode Island officers received him with words of affectionate confidence. "Now be strong and very courageous," wrote Trumbull, the governor of Connecticut; "may the God of the armies of Israel give you wisdom and fortitude, cover your head in the day of battle and danger, and convince our enemies that all their attempts to deprive these colonies of their rights and liberties are vain." To Trumbull, Washington

made answer: "The cause of our common country calls us both to an active and dangerous duty; Divine Providence, which wisely orders the affairs of men, will enable us to discharge it with fidelity and success."

The camp contained a people in arms, rather than an army. No one could tell precisely its numbers or the state of its stores. The soldiers had listed under different agreements, and for periods indefinite but short. Each colony had its own rules of military government and its own system of supplies; and the men, chiefly freeholders and sons of freeholders, held themselves bound only by a specific covenant, of which they interpreted the conditions and required the fulfilment.

While a return of the state of the army was preparing, Washington visited the American posts and reconnoitred those of the enemy. From Prospect Hill he took a comprehensive view of Boston and Charlestown. Of the latter town, nothing was to be seen but chimneys and rubbish. Above the ruins rose the tents of the great body of the British forces, strongly posted on Bunker Hill. Their sentries extended about one hundred and fifty yards beyond Charlestown Neck. On Breed's Hill there was a redoubt; two hundred men kept guard at Moultrie's Point; a battery was planted on Copp's Hill; three floating batteries lay in Mystic River; and a twenty-gun ship was anchored below the Charlestown ferry. The light-horse and a few men were in the town of Boston; the remainder were on Roxbury Neck, where they were deeply intrenched and strongly fortified, with outposts so far advanced that the sentries of the two armies could almost have conversed together. 1775. July.

Of the inhabitants of Boston, six thousand seven hundred and fifty-three still remained in the town, deprived of wholesome food; confined to their houses after ten o'clock in the evening; liable to be robbed without redress; ever exposed to the malice of the soldiers, and chidden for tears as proofs of disloyalty.

The number of the British army should have exceeded ten thousand men, besides the complements of ships-of-war

and transports, and was estimated by the American council of war as likely to amount altogether to eleven thousand five hundred; yet such were the losses on the retreat from Concord, at Bunker Hill, in skirmishes, from sickness, and by desertion, that, even after the arrival of all the transports, the commanding officer had never more than sixty-five hundred effective rank and file. But these were the choicest troops, profusely supplied with the materials of war; and, as he had the dominion of the water, he was able, as from a centre, to threaten any one point in the straggling line of their besiegers.

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Washington found the American army dispersed in a semicircle from the west end of Dorchester to Malden, a distance of nine miles. At Roxbury, where Thomas commanded two regiments of Connecticut and nine of Massachusetts, a strong work, planned by Knox and Waters, crowned the hill, and, with the brokenness of the rocky ground, secured that pass. The main street was defended by a breastwork, in front of which sharpened and well-pointed trees, placed with the tops towards Boston, prevented the approach of light-horse. A breastwork crossed the road to Dorchester. The men of Rhode Island were partly on Winter Hill, partly at Sewall's Farm, near the south bank of the Charles. The centre of the army was with Ward at Cambridge, its lines reaching from the colleges almost to the river. Putnam, with a division of four thousand men, composed of troops from Connecticut and eight Massachusetts regiments, lay intrenched on Prospect Hill. The New Hampshire forces were fortifying Winter Hill; assisted perhaps by a Rhode Island regiment, and certainly by Poor's Massachusetts regiment, which for want of tents had its quarters in Medford. The sentinels and smaller posts stretched beyond Malden River. Apart, in a thick wood, near where the Charles enters the bay, stood the wigwams of about fifty domiciliated Indians of the Stockbridge tribe. They were armed with bows and arrows, as well as guns; and, on their visit to the camp, were accompanied by their squaws and little ones.

The American rolls promised seventeen thousand men;

but Washington never had more than fourteen thousand five hundred fit for duty. The community in arms presented a motley spectacle. In dress there was no uniformity. The companies from Rhode Island were furnished with tents, and had the appearance of regular troops; others filled the college halls, the Episcopal church, and private houses; the fields were strown with lodges. Some were of boards, some of sail-cloth, or partly of both; others were constructed of stone and turf, or of birch and other brush. Some were thrown up in a careless hurry; others were curiously wrought with doors and windows, woven out of withes and reeds. The mothers, wives, or sisters of the soldiers were constantly coming to the camp, with supplies of clothing and household gifts. Boys and girls, too, flocked in with their parents from the country to visit their kindred, and gaze on the emblems and terrors of war. Eloquent chaplains kept alive the habit of daily prayer, and preached the wonted sermons on the day of the Lord. The habit of inquisitiveness and self-direction stood in the way of military discipline; the men had never learned implicit obedience, and knew not how to set about it; between the privates and their officers there prevailed the kindly spirit and equality of life at home. 1775. July.

In forming a judgment on the deficiency of numbers, discipline, and stores of the army, Washington made allowances for a devoted province like Massachusetts, which had so long suffered from anarchy and oppression. "Their spirit," said he, "has exceeded their strength." In the "great number of able-bodied men, active, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage," he saw the materials for a good army; but, accustomed to the watchfulness of woodsmen in the vicinity of wily enemies, he condemned the want of subordination, and the almost stupid confidence of inexperience, which pervaded not only the privates, but many of the subalterns. He set diligently about a reform, though it made "of his life one continued round of vexation and fatigue." The great inefficiency lay with the officers. "If they will but do their duty," said Hawley, "there is no fear of the soldiery." Towards the incom-

petent, who, in the suddenness of calling together so large a body of men, had crowded themselves upward with importunate selfishness, Washington resolved to show no lenity. By a prompt use of courts-martial, he made many examples, and soon introduced the aspect of discipline. Every day, Sundays not excepted, thousands were kept at work from four till eleven in the morning, strengthening the lines, and fortifying every point which could serve the enemy as a landing-place. The strong and uniform will of Washington was exerted, with a quiet and commanding energy. "There are many things amiss in this camp," said the chaplain Emerson; "yet, upon the whole, God is in the midst of us."

1775. July. Lee had not been many days in the camp, before the British generals in Boston, who knew him well, showed a disposition to tamper with him. From Philadelphia, he had, in June, addressed to Burgoyne, his old comrade in Portugal, a public letter condemning American taxation by parliament, and tracing the malady of the state to the corrupt influence of the crown. In an able reply, Burgoyne insisted, for himself and for Howe, that their political principles were unchanged, and invited Lee to "an interview" within the British lines, for the purpose of "such explanations as might tend to peace; for," said he, "I know Great Britain is ready to open her arms upon the first overture of accommodation." Clutching at the office of a negotiator, Lee directly requested the Massachusetts congress to depute one of their body to be a witness of what should pass. That body wisely dissuaded from the meeting, and referred him to a council of war for further advice. Thwarted in his purpose, Lee publicly declined to meet Burgoyne, but sent him a secret communication, in which he declared "upon his honor that the Americans had the certainty of being sustained by France and Spain." This clandestine correspondence proved that Lee had then no fidelity in his heart, though his treasons may as yet have been but caprices. His secret was kept in America, but the statement found its way through the British ministry to Vergennes.

All the while skirmishes continued. A party of Americans on the eighth of July drove in the British advance guard nearest Roxbury, and took several muskets. On the evening of the tenth, three hundred volunteers swept Long Island, in Boston harbor, of more than seventy sheep and fifteen head of cattle, and carried off sixteen prisoners. Two days later, just after the arrival of six crowded transports, Greaton, with one hundred and thirty-six men, went again to the same island, and burned the hay which was stacked there for the British cavalry. After a few days more, companies at Weymouth and Hingham reaped and brought off the ripe grain from Nantasket.

On the fifteenth, the army of Cambridge heard Langdon, the president of Harvard College, read the declaration by the continental congress for taking up arms, which they interpreted to mean that the Americans would never sheathe the sword till their grievances were redressed to their utmost wishes. On the eighteenth, it was read on Prospect Hill, amidst such shouts that the British on Bunker Hill put themselves in array; but neither then, nor even after the arrival of their last transports, did they venture an attack or even a sally. 1775. July.

In conformity to the direction of the continental congress, the people of Massachusetts, holding town-meetings according to their usage and their charter, chose a house of representatives. Boston took part in the elections; for the wanderers from that town were considered as bearing with them its living spirit, and the exiles, many of whom had not seen each other since they left their homes, came together at Concord. On the nineteenth, the provincial congress dissolved itself for ever; and the new house of representatives began the restoration of government by electing James Warren, of Plymouth, as its speaker. The following night, Vose, a major in Heath's regiment, set fire to the light-house in Boston harbor, bringing off a field-piece, a swivel, and the lamps. The boats of a British man-of-war, which lay within a mile, pursued the adventurous party; but they were in whale-boats, and escaped by rowing.

The continental fast was rigidly kept on the twentieth; the next day, the Massachusetts government was permanently constituted. An annually elected legislature themselves elected an annual council of twenty-eight, and that multitudinous body, which also had concurrent legislative power, assumed all executive authority. Bowdoin's name stood first on the list of councillors; and, on the organization of the board, he was made their president. His health was infirm; but he accepted the post, proving his zeal by this conspicuous act of overt treason. In a few weeks, the old civil and military offices were abolished, and the seal of the commonwealth was changed into an Anglo-American, holding a drawn sword, with the motto: "Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem," "With the sword he seeks placid rest under liberty." Forty thousand pounds were assessed on polls and estates; and authority was given to issue one hundred thousand more in bills of public credit, varying in amount from forty shillings to one.

"Congress and committees rule every province," said the British commander in chief. He looked about for colonial sympathy and contributions of men; but none wished to share his confinement. He sent officers to New York to board emigrant ships from Scotland, in the hope to enlist a few Highlanders. Growing more and more uneasy, on the twenty-fourth of July he wrote home that Boston was "the most disadvantageous place for all operations;" and he wished himself safely at New York.

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To repair the Boston light-house, carpenters were sent with a guard of thirty marines. On the evening of the thirtieth, Major Tupper attacked them with a party from Squantum and Dorchester, killed the lieutenant and one man, and captured all the rest of the party, fifty-three in number. The Americans had but one man killed and two or three wounded. The next day, in general orders, Washington praised their gallant and soldier-like conduct. The country regarded with amazement what Jefferson called "the adventurous genius and intrepidity of the New Englanders."

For all this, Washington, who was annoyed by shoals of

selfish importuners, and had not yet become aware how bad men clamorously throng round the distributors of offices, misjudged the Massachusetts people; but the existence of the army was itself a miracle of their benevolence, and its sustenance during May, June, and July, cannot be accounted for by ordinary rules. There was nothing regularly established, and yet many thousands of men were abundantly supplied. Touched by an all-pervading influence, each householder esteemed himself a sort of commissary. There were no public magazines, no large dealers in provisions; but the wants of the army rung in the ears of the farmers, and, from every cellar and barn-yard and field throughout Worcester and Hampshire and even Berkshire, such articles of food as could be spared were devoted to the camp, and everybody's wagons were used to forward them. But for this the forces must have dispersed; how it was done, cannot exactly be told; popular enthusiasm keeps little record of its sacrifices; only it was done, and, though great waste prevailed, the troops of Massachusetts, and for a long time those of New Hampshire, were fed by the unselfish care of the people, without so much as a barrel of flour from the continental congress. It was time for "the confederated colonies" to interpose.

1775. July.

The continental fast was rigidly kept
the next day, the Massachusetts gov
nently constituted. An annually ch
selves elected an annual council of
multitudinous body, which also ha
power, assumed all executive auth
stood first on the list of councillo
tion of the board, he was made
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XLIII.

AVERT WAR.

1775.

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bers; that officers for the reg-
the files were not full; that
major-generals and brigadiers had
the New England governments;
1775. July. officers was needed, to bring
of supplies; that there was the
coats and clothing; of hospitals; of
kind of arms, especially of artil-
of powder. Washington also called

To repair
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thirtieth, M
Squantum
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or th

not as yet been furnished with any
though it was strictly kept as the national
together, to hear from Schuyler that
prevailed at Ticonderoga. The
consisted of about twenty-eight hundred
parts in eight were from Connecticut,
under Wooster, exhibiting all the defects
themselves around Boston. Sentinels
posts, disorderly equality between officers
soldiers, a universal want of discipline, pro-
per; but, while he found fault enough

with all that he saw, he had little power to govern and reform a body of men whose education and manners were uncongenial to his own.

Compelled to look at the condition of the army, congress still shrunk from every act that could endanger the acceptance of its petition to the king. Except the companies of riflemen, who were enlisted only for one year, it called into being no troops whose period of service extended beyond the time when an answer to that petition was expected. On the side of Canada, it did little more than sanction the employment of a body of five thousand men for the protection of the border and the frontier, and confirm Schuyler in his command, subject to its own former orders and the future instructions of the commander in chief. Washington, who had represented the necessity of an army of twenty-two thousand men in Massachusetts, was authorized to keep up that number; but no method for obtaining troops was proposed beyond recommendations to the several governments of New England and New York; and no leave was given for permanent enlistments.

Thus far Franklin, who was constant in his attendance, had left his associates to sound their own way and shape their own policy; but he could maintain silent reserve no longer. After mature reflection, and after consulting with others, especially with Jefferson, on the twenty-first of July, the statesman, who, twenty-one years before, had at Albany reported a plan of union of provinces, submitted an outline for confederating the colonies in one nation. Each colony was to retain and amend its own laws and constitution according to its separate discretion, while the powers of the general government were to include all questions of war, peace, and alliance; commerce, currency, and the establishment of posts; the army, the navy, and Indian affairs; the management of all lands not yet ceded by the natives; the planting of new colonies; the settlement of all intercolonial disputes. The common treasury was to be supplied, and taxes to be laid and collected, by the several colonies in proportion to their numbers. Congress was to consist of one body only, whose members were to be apportioned tri- 1775. July.

ennially according to population, to be annually chosen, and to sit in each colony in rotation. To wield the executive power, it was to select out of its own members a council of twelve, of whom one third were to be annually renewed.

Every colony of Great Britain in North America, and even Ireland, which was still classed with the colonies, was invited to accede to the union. The imperfections in the new constitution, which time and experience would surely reveal, were to be amended by congress with the approbation of a majority of the colonial assemblies. Unless Britain should consent to make acceptable retractions and indemnities, the confederation was to be perpetual. The restriction was inserted from deference to the state of mind in the convention; in the intention of Franklin, the plan was an immediate declaration of independence and an effective system of a self-perpetuating republic. His scheme aimed at a real, ever enduring union; and it contained the two great elements of American political life, the domestic power of the several states, and the limited sovereignty of the central government.

1775. July.

The proposition of Franklin was, for the time, put aside. The future confederacy was never to number fewer members than thirteen; for news now came that Georgia "was no more the defaulting link in the American chain." On the fourth of July, it had met in provincial congress; and on the sixth had adhered to all the measures of resistance. It had also resolved neither to purchase nor to employ any slave imported from Africa after that day.

Lord North's proposal had already been declared inadequate; but as it was founded on joint resolves of parliament, officially recommended by Lord Dartmouth, and referred by Virginia, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to the decision of congress, Franklin, Jefferson, John Adams, and Richard Henry Lee were constituted a committee to report on its conditions as a basis for the desired accommodation. Meantime, congress remembered the friendly interposition of Jamaica, whose peculiar situation as an island of planters forbade active assistance, but whose good wishes ministered consolation. America and Ireland also came nearer to each

other. In July, the merchants of Dublin applauded the Earl of Effingham for "refusing to draw his sword against the lives and liberties of his fellow-subjects in America;" in the same month, congress sent to Ireland a pledge of their unalterable sympathy, and their joy that their own trials had extorted some mitigation of its wrongs. Howe was of an Irish family; to the Irish, therefore, they expressed their amazement at finding his name in the catalogue of their enemies; and they fletched their complaint by adding: "America loved his brother." 1775. July.

While these addresses were in progress, the British government was exerting every nerve to provide the means of reducing America; and for that end, Guy Johnson, acting independently of Carleton, was lavishing promises on the Six Nations and the savages of North-west Canada. An Iroquois chief, who attended the conference at Montreal, consented to take home a war-belt, emblazoned with the hatchet, but would engage himself no further; while the other savages, for whom a pipe of wine was broached, drank the blood of a Bostonian, as the ox on which they feasted was named, and sang the war-song, with promises of prowess when they should be called to the field.

Yet the majority of the congress, scrupulous not to outrun the convictions and sympathies of their constituents, and pleasing themselves by confiding in the speedy restoration of peace, not only made no adequate preparations for resistance, but would not even consent to relieve the state of anarchy by sanctioning the institution of governments in the several colonies. The hesitancy of so many members, especially of Dickinson, incensed John Adams, who maintained that the fifty or sixty men composing the congress should at once form a constitution for a great empire, provide for its defence, and in that safe attitude await the decision of the king. His letters to New England, avowing these opinions, were intercepted; and, so little were the central colonies prepared for the bold advice, they were published by the royalists as the surest way of destroying his influence, and heaping obloquy upon his name. So hard it was to rend the tie that bound America to England! The

most decisive measure of congress was the adoption of the paper prepared by Jefferson, on Lord North's proposal for conciliation.

1775. July. The American congress asked of the king a cessation of hostilities, and a settlement of the disputed questions by a concert between the crown and the collective colonies; Lord North offered, as the British ultimatum, to treat separately with each assembly for grants towards the general defence and for its own civil government, with the promise that parliament would abstain from taxing the province that should offer satisfactory terms. This offer was pronounced unreasonable, because it implied a purchase of the forbearance of parliament at an uncertain price; invidious, as likely to divide the colonies, and leave the dissatisfied to resist alone; unnecessary, for America had ever voluntarily contributed fully, when called upon as freemen; insulting, since the demand for money was made with fleets and armies; unjust, as it asked increased contributions without renouncing as an equivalent the monopoly of trade; unwarrantable, as a wrongful intermeddling in the colonial support of civil government; unsatisfactory, since it left the obnoxious acts unrepealed; insufficient, as it did not renounce the claim of a right to alter colonial charters and laws; insincere, as coming from a minister who had declared "that he would never treat with America, till he had brought her to his feet;" and delusive, as it offered no option but of devastation or abject submission. If the king would order a truce and point out a method for treating with the colonies jointly, they would desire nothing better than a colonial constitution, to be established by a mutual agreement.

Content with this declaration, congress shunned energetic measures. Franklin was selected to organize a post-office, and thus came to be known as the first postmaster-general; a hospital was agreed to for the army, and Benjamin Church elected its director; the rate of pay of officers and soldiers was finally settled; but these votes added no real strength; what was wanting was money and munitions of war. For money, a third million of dollars was ordered to be struck in paper bills. To promote their credit, some mode for re-

deeming them must be devised. There was no commerce, and therefore no hope of revenue from duties upon imports. Besides, congress had no power to enforce taxes of any kind. It was necessary, therefore, to charge each separate colony with the obligation to provide for sinking its quota of the bills issued by the general congress. Here, at the creation of the national finances, the question arose as to the proper principle for the apportionment, whether wealth or population; and, if population, whether slaves should be numbered as well as freemen. After a long opportunity for deliberation, it was agreed that population should constitute the distributive rule; and that all persons, including free negroes, mulattoes, and slaves, should be counted. Thus, to the correct principle of "no representation, no taxation," and of representation in proportion to population, was added the injustice of taxation in proportion to representation; so that the continental revenue was to be sustained by a collective poll-tax. Of four annual instalments, by which the continental notes were to be redeemed, the earliest was adjourned to the last day of November, 1779; in other words, was adjourned indefinitely. Paper money, which was never to be redeemed but by the concurring action of twelve or thirteen colonies at distant periods, was virtually irredeemable, and would surely depreciate with rapidity; yet the united colonies had no other available resource, when they rose against a king who easily commanded annually twenty millions of pounds sterling in solid money.

There was no mode of obtaining munitions of war but by throwing open the ports and inviting commerce, especially with the French and Dutch colonies; yet the last act of congress, before its adjournment, was the renewal of the agreement, neither directly nor indirectly to export any merchandise or commodity whatever to Great Britain, Ireland, or to the British, or even to the foreign, West Indies. 1775. July.

On the first day of August, congress adjourned for five weeks, leaving the insurgent country with no representative of its unity but Washington and the army.

CHAPTER XLIV.

AMERICA AWAITS THE KING'S DECISION.

AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, 1775.

THE duties of Washington were more various and burdensome than ever devolved upon a European commander. In the absence of an organized continental government, and with a most imperfect one in Massachusetts, it fell on him to take all thought for his army, from its general direction to the smallest want of his soldiers. Conspicuous before the world, with apparently no limiting authority at his side, he made it his rule, as a military chief, to obey most scrupulously the civil power, which, from its inchoate character, was feeble and uncertain, prompt to resolve rashly, destitute of system, economy, and consistent perseverance. In his intercourse with the neighboring colonial governments, whose good-will was his main resource, he showed the same deference to their laws, the same courtesy to their magistrates; and his zeal to give effectiveness to his power never hurried him beyond his self-prescribed bounds. Congress had voted him five hundred thousand dollars, in its rapidly depreciating paper, but the persons who were to sign the bills were dilatory; and in a scene of confusion and discord, without money, without powder, without artillery, without proper arms, he was yet expected to organize victory and drive the British from Boston.

1775. Aug.

By the fourth of August, the army was already formed into three grand divisions, at Roxbury, Cambridge, and Winter Hill, under the respective command of Ward, Lee, and Putnam. Each division consisted of two brigades, each brigade of about six regiments; but Washington was still

unable to return the fire of the enemy; for when, with considerable difficulty, he obtained an accurate return of the amount of powder on hand, he found not more than enough to furnish his men with nine rounds of cartridge. The extremity of danger could not be divulged, even while he was forced to apply in every direction for relief. To Cooke, the governor of Rhode Island, he wrote on the fourth of August for every pound of powder and lead that could be spared from that colony; no quantity, however small, was beneath notice. He invoked the enterprise of John Brown and other merchants of Providence; he sent an address to the inhabitants of Bermuda. His importunate messages were extended even to New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; and for his aid those colonies readily left themselves bare, till small supplies could arrive from South Carolina and Georgia. 1775. Aug.

In all his wants, Washington had no safe trust but in the spirit of the country, and that never failed him. Between the twenty-fifth of July and the seventh of August, fourteen hundred riflemen, a greater number than congress had authorized, arrived in the camp. A company from Virginia had Daniel Morgan for its captain, one of the best officers of the revolution. His early life was so obscured by poverty, that no one remembered his parents or his birthplace, or if he had had sister or brother. Supported by his daily labor, he was yet fond of study, and he learned by slow degrees to write well. Migrating from New Jersey, he became a wagoner in Virginia in time to witness Braddock's expedition. In 1774, he again saw something of war, having descended the Ohio with Dunmore. The danger of his country called him into action, which was his appropriate sphere. In person he was more than six feet high and well proportioned, of an imposing presence, moving with strength and grace, of a hardy constitution that defied fatigue, hunger, and cold. His open countenance was the mirror of an ingenuous nature. He could glow with vehement anger, but passion never mastered his power of discernment; and his disposition was sweet and peaceful, so that he delighted in acts of kindness, harbored neither

malice nor revenge, and made his house the home of cheerfulness and hospitality. His faculties were quickened by the nearness of danger, which he was sure to be prepared to meet. An instinctive discrimination of character assisted him in choosing among his companions those in whom it was wise to confide; and a reciprocal sympathy made the obedience of his soldiers an act of affectionate confidence. Of all the officers whom Virginia sent into the war, next to Washington, Morgan was the greatest; equal to every occasion in the camp or before an enemy, unless it were that he knew not how to be idle or to retreat. In ten days after he received his commission, he attracted to himself from the valley a company of ninety-six. His first lieutenant was John Humphreys; his second, William Heth; his sergeant, Charles Porterfield. No captain ever commanded braver soldiers, or was better supported by his officers; in twenty-one days they marched from Winchester in Virginia to Cambridge.

In Maryland, Michael Cresap, then just thirty-three years old, on receiving notice by the committee of Frederick to raise a company, despatched a messenger beyond the Alleghanies; and, at his bidding, two-and-twenty of his old companions in arms came swift as a roe or a young hart over the mountains. From the east side, so many volunteered that he could pick his men; and with light step and dauntless spirit they marched to the siege of Boston. Cresap moved among them as their friend and father; but he was not destined to take a further part in the war. Driven by illness from Washington's camp, he died on his way home at New York, where he was buried with honor as a martyr. The second Maryland company was commanded by Price, whose lieutenant was Otho Holland Williams.

1775. Aug. Of the eight companies from Pennsylvania, William Thompson was colonel. The second in command was Edward Hand, a native of Ireland, who had come over as a surgeon's mate. One of the captains was Hendricks, long remembered for his stateliness of person and his heroic soul.

The alacrity with which these troops came together showed that the public mind was roused on the Ohio and beyond the Blue Ridge, not less than in New England. On the fourteenth of June, congress authorized their enlistment; and in less than sixty days twelve companies were in the camp, having come on foot from four to eight hundred miles. The men were strong and of great endurance, many of them more than six feet high; they wore leggins and moccasons, and an ash-colored hunting-shirt with a double cape; each one carried a rifle, a hatchet, a small axe, and a hunter's knife. They could subsist on a little parched corn, and game, killed as they went along; at night, wrapped in their blankets, they willingly made a tree their canopy, the earth their bed. The rifle in their hands sent its ball with unerring precision a distance of two or three hundred yards. Their motto was: "LIBERTY OR DEATH." They were the first troops levied under the authority of the continental congress, and they formed the best corps in the camp. Accustomed to the noble independence of the woods, they yet gave an example of subordination, discipline, and vigilance. Enlisted for a year only, many of them, both officers and men, continued in the service during the war, and distinguished themselves in almost every field. They taught Frederic of Prussia to introduce into his service light bodies of sharpshooters, and their example has modified the tactics of European armies.

On the twenty-ninth of July, a party of riflemen found their way behind the guard which the British had advanced on the side of Charlestown, and, before it could be supported, killed two men and took five prisoners.

On the ninth of August, the "Falcon" was seen from Cape Ann in chase of two schooners bound to Salem. 1775. Aug. One of these was taken; a fair wind wafted the other into Gloucester harbor. Linzee, the captain of the "Falcon," followed with his prize, and, after anchoring, sent his lieutenant and thirty-six men in a whale-boat and two barges to bring under his bow the schooner that had escaped. As the bargemen, armed with muskets and swivels, boarded

her at her cabin windows, men from the shore fired on them, killing three and wounding the lieutenant in the thigh. Upon this, Linzee sent his prize and a cutter to cannonade the town. The broadside which followed did little injury; and the Gloucester men kept up a fight for several hours, till, with the loss of but two, they took both schooners, the cutter, the barges, and every man in them. Linzee lost thirty-five men, or half his crew. The next day, he warped off; carrying away no spoils except the skiff, in which the wounded lieutenant had been brought away.

1775. Aug. Meantime, Gage endeavored to terrify the Americans and cheer his own soldiers by foretelling the coming of thousands of Russians and Hessians and Hanoverians. Performing no one act of courage during the summer, he vented his ill-humor on his unhappy prisoners; throwing officers of high rank indiscriminately into a felon's jail, to languish of wounds and even to undergo amputation. Pleading for "kindness and humanity" as the "joint rule for their treatment of prisoners," Washington remonstrated; but Gage scorned to promise reciprocity to rebels, menaced "dreadful consequences" for any "barbarity" shown to British prisoners, and further replied: "Britons, ever pre-eminent in mercy, have overlooked the criminal in the captive; your prisoners, whose lives by the laws of the land are destined to the cord, have hitherto been treated with care and kindness; indiscriminately it is true, for I acknowledge no rank that is not derived from the king." Consulting with Lee, Washington, who knew Gage from the day when his want of presence of mind lost the battle on the Monongahela, rejoined: "I shall not stoop to retort and invective. You affect, sir, to despise all rank not derived from the same source with your own. I cannot conceive one more honorable than that which flows from the uncorrupted choice of a brave and free people, the purest source and original fountain of all power. Far from making it a plea for cruelty, a mind of true magnanimity would comprehend and respect it." Towards his supercilious adversary, Washington professed the purpose of retaliation, as he sent the British officers who were his prisoners into

the interior; but he privately countermanded the order, and allowed them liberty on parole. The lenity was ill requited. One of them, Stanhope by name, was base enough to forfeit his honor.

The arrival of re-enforcements and recruits could not inspirit Gage to venture outside of his lines. His pent-up troops, impaired by skirmishes, desertions, and most of all by sickness, were disheartened by their manifestly "disadvantageous situation." His own timorousness, presaging "a long and bloody war," figured to itself the maritime powers of Europe taking possession of some of the provinces, and a southern governor falling a prey to negroes. He confessed to Dartmouth his fears for his own safety; that nothing could justify his risking an attack; that even to quit Boston safely would require the greatest secrecy.

Washington was all the while more closely investing the town. In the night following the twenty-sixth of August, with a fatigue party of a thousand, a guard of twenty-four hundred, he took possession of Ploughed Hill. On the next day, Gage began a cannonade, which for the need of powder could not be returned. On the twenty-eighth, the British were seen drawn up on Bunker Hill; and Washington, notwithstanding his want of ammunition, offered battle by marching five thousand men to Ploughed Hill and Charlestown road. Silence was observed on both sides till three in the afternoon, when it appeared that the British would not accept the challenge. But, three days later, Gage enjoyed the triumph of cutting down the Boston Liberty Tree; and when maurading expeditions returned with sheep and hogs and cattle, captured from islands and along shore, the bells were rung as for a victory. 1775. Aug.

Notwithstanding present weakness, Washington saw in the courage and patriotism of the country the warrant of ultimate success, and was eager to take every advantage which his resources warranted. Looking beyond the recovery of Boston, he revolved in his mind how the continent might be closed up against Britain. He rejected a plan for an expedition into Nova Scotia; but learning from

careful and various inquiries that the Canadian peasantry were well disposed to the Americans, and that the domiciliated Indian tribes desired neutrality, he resolved to direct the invasion of Canada from Ticonderoga, and, by way of the Kennebec and the Chaudière, to send a party to surprise Quebec, or at least draw Carleton to its relief, and thus lay open the road to Montreal.

The war gradually spread over the sea. The assembly of Rhode Island, in June, directed its committee of safety to charter and fit out two armed vessels to protect the trade of the colony. In July, the legislature of Connecticut ordered the equipment of two armed vessels by the governor, for the defence of its sea-coast. In the same month, the committees of safety of South Carolina and Georgia sent out cruisers to watch for a ship expected with gunpowder. Most of the colonies had vessels out on similar errands. Early in August, Washington proposed that Rhode Island should attempt the hazardous project of seizing a public magazine in Bermuda; for, said he, "we are in a situation which requires us to run all risks." But, before the advice could be carried out, George Ord, in a sloop despatched from Philadelphia by Robert Morris under pretence of a trading voyage to New Providence, had taken the magazine by surprise, and, in conjunction with a schooner from South Carolina, had carried off more than a hundred barrels of powder. On the twenty-sixth, Rhode Island instructed its delegates in congress to propose a continental navy. On the second of September, Washington, acting under his general powers, instructed Broughton of Marblehead, as an army captain, "to take command of a detachment of the army of the United Colonies," in a schooner equipped at the continental expense, and to intercept all vessels laden with supplies for the British army. Other vessels were employed under the federal authority, with good success.

1775. Sept.

Solicitations to distribute continental troops along the New England shore, wherever British marauding parties threatened a descent, were invariably rejected. The governor of Connecticut, who for the defence of that province

desired to keep back a portion of the newly raised levies, resented a refusal, as an unmerited neglect of a colony that was foremost in its exertions; but the general explained with dignity that he must prosecute great plans for the common safety; that the campaign could not depend on the piratical expeditions of two or three men-of-war, while numerous detachments, to guard the coast, would amount to the dissolution of the army. 1775. Sept.

From his arrival in Cambridge, "his life was one continual round of vexation and fatigue." The troops of Connecticut and Rhode Island were engaged only to the first of December, those of Massachusetts only to the end of the year; and no provision had been made for filling their places. The continental currency, as well as that of all the provinces, was rapidly depreciating, and even of such paper money the paymaster had not a single dollar in hand. The commissary-general had strained his credit to the utmost for subsistence for the army; so had Mifflin, who in August had been appointed quartermaster-general. The greater part of the troops submitted to a necessary reduction from their stated allowance with a reluctance bordering upon mutiny. There were no adequate means of storing wood against the cold weather, or procuring blankets and shelter. Washington would gladly have attempted a decisive blow; but, in September, his council of war agreed unanimously that an attack on Boston was not to be hazarded. The country expected tidings of the rout and expulsion of the British, although the want of powder, of which his stock proved less than his worst apprehensions, compelled him to inactivity, from a cause which he concealed.

Under every discouragement from the conflicting rules and agreements, laws and usages, of separate colonies, he toiled to form an army which he yet knew must fall away from him before victory could be achieved; and "braving the shafts of censure, and pledging a soldier's fame, which was dearer to him than life," he silently submitted to the reproach of having adopted from choice the system of inaction, at which his soul revolted.

CHAPTER XLV.

CONDITION OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES.

JULY—OCTOBER, 1775.

IN the colonies which were not immediately involved in the war, the officers of the crown should have shown
1775. self-possession and forbearance. Adopting this system, William Franklin, the governor of New Jersey, was ever on the alert to soothe, divide, or confuse the patriots; professed an equal regard for the rights of the people and the royal prerogatives; continued the usual sessions of the assembly; and, where the authority of his office was diminished, confined himself to complaint, remonstrance, or advice. But the self-organized, popular government moved side by side with that of the king; the provincial congress which assembled in May, and again by adjournment in August, directed a general association, took cognizance of those who held back, assumed the regulation of the militia, apportioned a levy of ten thousand pounds, excused the Quakers from bearing arms though not from contributing to relieve distress, and, by providing for the yearly election of its successors, severed from the colonial legislature the appointment of future delegates to the general congress. The new provincial congress, chosen with all the forms of law by the qualified voters of each county, came together in October; and, while they anxiously prayed for the re-establishment of harmony with Britain, they so far looked to the contingency of war as to offer to raise four thousand minute men, and actually to enroll two regiments for the continental service. It was on this occasion that William Alexander, commonly called the Earl of Stirling, a man of courage, intelligence, and promptitude,

though a member of the royal council, entered the army as colonel of the battalion of East New Jersey. The attempt to raise money by taxation having failed, the expenses were met by a reluctant issue of thirty thousand pounds in bills of credit.

The disposition of New Jersey to languor was confirmed by Pennsylvania, where, from the first, Dickinson acted in concert with the proprietary government; and the ardent patriots, who had less command of public confidence, less influence with the religious parties, less tried ability in statesmanship, less social consideration in the city which was then the most populous and most wealthy in British America, yielded to his guidance. The first Pennsylvania convention, in June, 1774, electing as its president the opulent merchant Thomas Willing, long an opponent of independence, aimed at no continuing political organization, and even referred the choice of the Pennsylvania delegates to congress to the house of representatives, in which loyalists held the majority, and Galloway exercised unrestricted sway. At the second convention, held in January, 1775, the president, Joseph Reed, exerted all his influence, in public and in private, to defeat the intention of arming and disciplining the province, and to confine the votes as much as possible to the encouragement of manufactures and agriculture; and, while with a clear eye he foresaw that the coming summer would form an epoch in history, he desired to be known to the ministry as a person who, though opposed to parliamentary taxation, had such weight and influence in the province that the British government upon the whole might wish him to be on their side. It was noticed that Dickinson did not make his appearance in the meeting till the day before its dissolution, and then only to ward off the taunts of his enemies. The convention once more left every thing to the legislature; though a motion prevailed, empowering the committee of Philadelphia to give notice, if a provincial congress should again become necessary. 1775.

The events at Lexington and Bunker Hill did not shake the purpose of Dickinson to prevent the meeting of another

convention. His wish that the province should move in unbroken array led him even to importune his opponent Galloway not to refuse a seat in the next continental
1775. congress; and Galloway was excused only at his own urgent request. Had Pennsylvania intrusted the direction of measures of resistance to a convention, composed of men free from religious scruples about taking up arms and unshackled by oaths of allegiance, domestic conflict would have been evaded. But the wealth and social influence of Philadelphia deprecated a revolutionary government, which must emanate from undetermined constituencies and exercise powers undefined; they, therefore, for a time, made common cause with the proprietary. The family of Penn had recovered public regard. Converts to the Anglican church, their Episcopacy was yet of a mild form, free from intolerance and proselyting zeal; and from their interests and their position they were the most sincere friends to conciliation with Britain. Their apostasy from the Society of Friends was so far forgiven, that their policy received the support of the rigid Quakers, whose religious scruples confined them to long-suffering, or peace, or, at furthest, to passive resistance. To these elements of power, Dickinson, who claimed to lead the patriot party of Pennsylvania, added his influence.

The system was wise, if nothing was intended beyond efforts for the restoration of harmony; but it did not provide for ulterior measures. The proprietary and his immediate friends had ties of loyalty which they never would break, and, to defeat independence, were swayed by interested motives which would increase in strength in proportion as the necessity for independence should appear. Insincerity, therefore, marked the character of the assembly; no vigorous action proceeded spontaneously from its members. Many of them, who had long held their seats and hankered after a re-election, were led step by step to seemingly bold resolutions; the friends of the proprietary desired to keep up such an appearance as would prevent a transfer of the direction of affairs to a popular convention; the governor and the

assembly understood their relative position perfectly; he joined with them in such acts as could be justified before the king; they, by their own separate vote, 1775. adopted the measures which could not receive his official sanction. In this manner, the house, in June, appointed a committee of safety, but with Dickinson at its head, and placed at its disposition thirty-five thousand pounds in bills of credit. At the adjourned session, in September, various memorials were presented from primary meetings, in the hope of quickening the energy of their representatives; but they were laid on the table. The coalition was too powerful to be overthrown in the house, but murmurs and well-founded suspicions prevailed out of doors; Franklin saw the folly of temporizing, dispassionately expressed his opinions, and bided his time.

The provinces of Delaware and Pennsylvania were under one executive head; and their inhabitants interchangeably took service in one or both. Mackean, an efficient member of the committee of Philadelphia, was the leading delegate from Delaware for the continent. The conduct of that little colony was unequivocal; its assembly unreservedly assented to the measure of keeping up an armed force, and unanimously assumed their share of the expense. Its first convention, its assembly, and its council of safety, moved in harmony.

The people of Maryland, happier than that of Pennsylvania, escaped intestine dissensions and insured unanimity, by passing over the proprietary government and intrusting the conduct of resistance to a series of conventions. The prudent, the slow, the hesitating, were allowed an influence; but, from the first, all parties acquiesced in the principle of deriving power from the people; and the province, however its movement was sometimes retarded, proceeded courageously in an unbroken line. In November, 1774, it adhered to the association adopted in the general congress, and its patriotism was confirmed by the austerity of religious zeal. At an adjourned session in December, the Maryland convention, fifty-five members being present from sixteen counties, resolved unanimously to resist to the utmost of

their power taxation by parliament, or the enforcement of the penal acts against Massachusetts. To this end they voted with equal unanimity a well-regulated militia, to be composed of all the freemen of the colony, between fifteen and sixty. They resolved also that all former difficulties about religion or politics from henceforth should cease, and be for ever buried in oblivion; so that with the establishment of the republic, the Catholic had the assurance of recovering his rightful political equality in the land which a Catholic proprietary had set apart for religious freedom. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, who, under the British government, had not had so much as a vote at the polls, was placed unanimously on the committee of correspondence.

It was throughout the continent a subject of regret that the zeal of Dulany had grown cool. As he kept silent, the foremost man in Maryland was Samuel Chase, like Dulany a lawyer; less circumspect and less careful of appearances. Being six feet in height and of a large broad frame, he was imposing by his strength. In character he was downright, brave, and persevering; capable of error from rashness or self-will, but not capable of faltering in the cause which he approved. Vehement even to a fault, of a warm and sanguine temperament, gruff and impatient of useless words, he did not always speak softly or shun coarse invective; but his undaunted spirit, his fierce independence of mind, his unbending energy, his scorn of plausible hypocrisy, his eloquence which corresponded with the vigor of his nature, justly won for him the confidence of Maryland.

That province, like other colonies, had hoped for the recovery of American rights through the interruption
1775. of trade; but in April, 1775, a day or two before the arrival of news from Lexington, on occasion of a rumor that New York city was to be fortified and garrisoned, they gave their delegates discretion to proceed "even to the last extremity, if indispensably necessary for the safety and preservation of their liberties and privileges."

The proprietary at this time had no hold on public affection from historic recollections; for he was an illegitimate infant child of the late libertine Lord Baltimore, the

last of that name; and it might seem a shame to a commonwealth that its executive power should be transferable by testamentary disposition to a bastard. Yet the party of the proprietary was strong and wary; had struck deep root into the soil of Maryland itself, and counted Dulany among its friends. The lieutenant-governor, Robert Eden, who had made himself beloved, did not attempt to raise the king's standard, maintaining a prudent reserve and acquiescing in what he could not prevent or alter; so that he and the proprietary party were regarded in the strife as neutrals, not hostile to the American claims of right.

The convention which met at Annapolis on the twenty-sixth of July resolved fully to sustain Massachusetts, and meet force by force. They saw "no alternative but base submission or manly resistance." They therefore "approved of the opposition by arms to British troops." The temporary government which was instituted was, in its form, a universal association of the people of Maryland, one by one. Recognising the continental congress as invested with a general supervision, it managed internal affairs through a provincial council of safety, and subordinate executive committees, which were appointed in every county, parish, or hundred. It directed the enrolment of forty companies of minute men; established a military code; authorized the emission of more than a quarter of a million of dollars, in bills varying in amount from sixteen dollars to two thirds of a dollar; and it extended the franchise to all freemen having a visible estate of forty pounds sterling, so that Protestant and Catholic might henceforward go to the polls together. The government thus instituted was administered with regularity and lenity. 1775.

By the prudent inactivity of the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, those four colonies awaited the decision of Great Britain in tranquillity; south of the Potomac, Dunmore precipitated a conflict, which the people of Virginia, educated in the love of constitutional monarchy, and disinclined to change for the sake of change, would gladly have avoided. In spite of their wishes, the retreat of the governor from Williamsburg

foreshadowed the end of the colonial system. The house endeavored not to take things out of their old channel. They revived the memory of Lord Botetourt, and desired an administration like his; they reposed full trust in the royal council, a thoroughly loyal body of the king's own selection, and asked only that the governor would conform to its advice. In vain: Dunmore by a message, on Saturday the twenty-fourth of July, summoned the house before him at what he called "his present residence," that is, on board of a British man-of-war; unless they would come, he would not give his assent even to such of their acts as he approved. Had they appeared, the whole legislature might have found themselves kept as hostages and prisoners. There were parties in Virginia, as everywhere else, more or less disinclined to a final rupture. As yet the great
1775. majority earnestly desired a continuance of their ancient constitution; but this message could not but be voted unanimously a high breach of the rights and privileges of the house; and in this manner the colonial legislature ceased to exist. In concurrence with the council, the house appropriated money for the expense of ratifying the treaty with the Indians on the Ohio, and then adjourned till the twelfth of October; but no quorum ever again assembled. In the one hundred and fifty-sixth year from the institution of legislative government in Virginia, in the person of his governor, the king abdicated his legislative power in the oldest and most loyal of his colonies; henceforward, Virginia, reluctantly separating herself from the tried and cherished system of constitutional monarchy, must take care of herself.

On the seventeenth of July, 1775, her people assembled at Richmond in a convention, which was now, without a rival, the supreme government on her soil. Every procedure was marked by that mixture of courage and moderation which in times of revolution is the omen of success. The military preparations had nothing in view beyond defence; a proposal of volunteer companies in Williamsburg to secure the public money was discountenanced and rejected. Two regiments of regular troops in fifteen com-

panies were called into being; sixteen regiments of minute men were to keep themselves in readiness for actual service; for the command of the first regiment of regulars, the convention, passing over Hugh Mercer, now a resident of Virginia, elected Patrick Henry, who thus became for a few months, in rank at least, the provincial commander in chief. For the relief of scrupulous consciences in the army, it was made an instruction that dissenting clergymen might pray with the soldiers and preach to them. Delegates to serve in general congress for a year were elected, and among them once more Richard Bland. Of the same lineage with Giles Bland, who ninety-nine years before had perished as a martyr to liberty, having in his veins the blood of Powhatan and Pocahontas, trained in the college of William and Mary, and afterwards in the university of Edinburgh, he was venerable with age, public service, and a long career of vigilant, unswerving fidelity to civil liberty. Profoundly versed in the history and charters and laws of Virginia, in 1766 he had displayed the rights of the colonies with an uncompromising vigor and prophetic insight, such as Dickinson, who wrote after him, never could equal. His deep blue eyes are now dimmed; his step has lost its certainty; he rises to decline the appointment, and the convention hangs on his words: "I am an old man, almost deprived of sight; the honorable testimony of my country's approbation shall ever animate me, as far as I am able, to support the glorious cause in which America is now engaged; but advanced age renders me incapable of an active part in the weighty concerns which must be agitated in the great council of the United Colonies, and I desire that some abler person may supply my place." The convention, having unanimously thanked him for his fidelity, released him from further service only on account of his years. A strong party, at the head of which were Henry, Jefferson, and Carrington, turned for his successor to George Mason, a man of yet rarer virtues, now for the first time a member of a political body. He was a patriot, who renounced ambition, making no quest of fame, never appearing in public life but from a sense of duty and for a great end. 1775.

"He will not refuse," said Jefferson and Henry, "if ordered by his country." But he was still suffering from an overwhelming domestic grief; as he gave his reasons for his refusal, tears ran down the presiding officer's cheeks; and the convention listened to him with the sympathy of a family circle. At the same time that Mason declined, he recommended Francis Lee, who was accordingly chosen in the room of Bland, yet only by one vote over a candidate noted for dread of a democratic republic.

1775.

A spirit of moderation prevailed in the election of the committee of safety for the province; and Edmund Pendleton, who was known to desire "a redress of grievances, and not a revolution of government," was placed at its head.

To defray the charges of the late Indian war, and to provide for her defence, Virginia, following the general example, directed an emission of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds in paper currency, the smallest bill to be for one shilling and threepence. George Mason urged the continuance of the land-tax and the poll-tax, which would have annually sunk fifty thousand pounds; but taxation was suspended for a year.

Having made preparations for security, both against invasions and a servile insurrection, the members of the convention once more declared before God and the world that they did bear faith and true allegiance to his majesty George III., their only lawful and rightful king; and would, so long as it might be in their power, defend him and his government, as founded on the laws and well-known principles of the constitution; but that they were also determined to defend their lives and properties, and maintain their just rights and privileges, even at the extremest hazards.

CHAPTER XLVI.

GEORGIA AND THE CAROLINAS.

JULY—OCTOBER, 1775.

"GOD grant conciliatory measures may take place; there is not an hour to be lost; the state of affairs will not admit of the least delay:" such was the frank message sent to the ministry in July by the able Sir James Wright, of Georgia; and, from a province in which "a king's governor had little or no business," he pressed for leave to return to England and explain and enforce his advice. The people met in congress; a council of safety maintained an executive supervision; local affairs were left to parochial committees; but the crown officers were not molested, and but for sympathy with South Carolina, and rumors of attempts to excite slaves to desolate the heart of the colony, Indians to lay waste the frontier, some good appearance of authority would have been kept up. When in Savannah the chief justice refused to accept bail for a South Carolina recruiting officer, a crowd broke open the jail and set the prisoner free; and on the fifth of August he beat up for men at the door of the chief justice himself and hard by the house of the governor. The militia officers were compelled to sign the association; and navigation was so effectually regulated, that a ship which arrived with two hundred and four slaves was compelled to go away without landing them. In September, two hundred and fifty barrels of powder were taken by the "liberty" people from a vessel at Tybee. 1775. July to Oct.

South Carolina needed more than ever a man of prudence at the head of the administration; and its new governor owed his place only to his birth. The younger son of a

noble family, Lord William Campbell knew nothing of the people to whom he was come, and put himself under the direction of the passionate and violent among his irresponsible subordinates. The more temperate, especially Bull, the lieutenant-governor, kept aloof, and had no part in his superciliousness and mistakes. The planters were disposed to loyalty from affection and interest; but he would not notice the elements for conciliation, nor listen to the advice of the considerate and best informed. The council of safety, composed of seventeen men, elected by the convention in June, proved its dislike of independence by choosing Henry Laurens for its president; but the governor wrote home that "the people of the best sense and the greatest authority, as well as the rabble, had been gradually led into the most violent measures by a set of desperate and designing men;" and he planned the reduction of the province by arms.

1775. July to Oct.

He delayed calling an assembly, in the hope of "favorable news from the northward" to "moderate the frenzy with which all ranks seemed possessed;" but, while intercepted letters revealed the tampering of British agents with Indians, on the eighth of July tidings arrived from Boston of the battle of Bunker Hill. On the tenth, Campbell met his first legislature; and, in his opening speech, he denied by implication the existence of grievances. "I warn you," said he, "of the danger you are in; the violent measures adopted cannot fail of drawing down inevitable ruin on this flourishing colony." These criminations and menaces left little hope of escaping war; the assembly lingered inactive through the summer, and asked in vain to be adjourned.

The patriot party was composed chiefly of residents in the low country, and hardly formed a majority of the inhabitants of the colony. The best educated were so unanimous, that when Campbell needed one more member of the council to make up the quorum, which required but three, he was under a necessity to appoint an Englishman who was collector of the port; for, said he, "there is not another person in the province whom I can recommend, who would

accept of that honor, in so low an estimation is it at present held." But in the districts of Camden and Ninety-Six he was assured that thousands were animated by affection to the king. In the region from the line of the Catawba and Wateree to the Congaree and Saluda, and all the way to Georgia, embracing the part of South Carolina where there were the fewest slaves, the rude settlers had no close sympathy with the planters. Instead of raising indigo or rice, they were chiefly herdsmen; below, the Protestant Episcopal Church was predominant; the land above tide-water was thronged with various Christian sects. They had no common family recollections or ancestry, no ties by frequent intermarriages; a body of Germans, who occupied Saxe-Gotha on the Congaree, looked to the king as their landlord, and would not risk an ejectment; others, recently escaped from poverty in Europe, cared only for subsistence and quiet. Still less did the two populations blend in political affinities; legislative power under the provincial government rested exclusively in the hands of men of the church of England; delegates were elected only from the parishes near the sea; west of Orangeburg, there had been no representation; and the occupants of the land, as a class, were too newly arrived, and too ignorant of the questions at issue, and too little trained to a participation in public life, to have fixed opinions. The planters were in constant connection with England; enough of them had been bred there to give a tone to society and a direction to opinion; they looked down upon the boors of the interior as "men of low degree, though of eminence in that new country; totally illiterate, though of common natural parts;" and there were not wanting agents or partisans of the crown — Fletchall, the very active and spirited Robert Cunningham, Patrick Cunningham, and others — to fill the minds of these rude husbandmen with bitterness against "the gentlemen." The summer was passed in indecisive struggles for superiority; the council of safety sent William Henry Drayton and a clergyman, William Tennent, to counteract the emissaries of the crown. Fort Augusta in Georgia was taken and held by the Americans; the possession of the fort at

1775. July to Oct.

Ninety-Six was disputed. Quiet was restored by a truce rather than by the submission of the royalists. It was on this occasion that Andrew Pickens was first heard of as a captain in arms; a Puritan in religion; a patriot in thought and deed. On the other hand, Moses Kirkland, who had accepted a commission from the council of safety, changed sides, came down to Campbell with the assurance that, on the appearance of a British force, it would be joined by four thousand men, and was sent to the commander in chief at Boston to concert an expedition against the south. The upland inhabitants wished to be let alone; if compelled to take sides, a majority of them inclined to the royal standard.

The danger from the savages was more terrible; and the discovery that a large body of them stood ready to seize the scalping-knife at the king's behest set the community in a blaze. Stuart, the Indian agent for the southern department, knew the red men too well to advise calling them down; but he loved his office, and had withdrawn from Charleston to St. Augustine, where he was open to the worst suggestions of the most reckless underlings, who yet were always clamoring at his dilatoriness and inefficiency. The quickening authority of Gage was invoked; and one of the last acts of that commander was to write to him from Boston: "The people of Carolina in turning rebels to their king have lost all faith; improve a correspondence with the Indians to the greatest advantage, and even, when opportunity offers, make them take arms against his majesty's enemies, and distress them all in their power; for no terms are now to be kept with them; they have brought down all the savages they could against us here, who, with their riflemen, are continually firing upon our advanced sentries. In short, no time should be lost to distress a set of people so wantonly rebellious; supply the Indians with what they want, be the expense what it will, as every exertion must now be made on the side of government." On receiving this order, Stuart sent by way of Pensacola to the lower Creeks and even to the Chickasaws. To the upper Creeks he despatched his own brother, "to say publicly that the want of trade and ammunition was entirely owing to the rebels;"

1775. July to Oct.

that, "if they would attach themselves to the king's interest, they should find plenty pouring in upon them;" and he was also to bribe Emistisico, the great chief of the upper Creeks, by promising him, "in private, the greatest honor and favor, if he would exert himself to bring the king's rebellious white subjects to reason and a sense of their duty." The same method was pursued with the second man of the Little Tallassees, and with the Overhill Cherokees and their assembled chiefs; to whom, as well as to the upper Creeks, ammunition was distributed, that they might be ready "to act in the execution of any concerted plan for distressing the rebels." Cameron, the deputy agent, shrunk from the thought, saying: "I pray God there may be no intention to involve the Cherokees in the dispute; for, should the Indians be prompted to take up the hatchet against the colonies, they could not be restrained from committing the most inhuman barbarities on women and children. I am averse to acts of this nature, though my duty to my sovereign exceeds all other considerations." 1775. July to Oct.

But the greatest danger to the planters was from the sea, and the council of safety slowly admitted the need of defending the harbor of Charleston. During the summer, ships were boarded off Savannah River and near St. Augustine; and more than twenty thousand pounds of gunpowder were acquired. The export of rice was allowed on no other terms than that it should be exchanged for arms and ammunition, which were obtained from Hispaniola and from the French and Dutch islands. The governor was all the while urging the ministry to employ force against the three southernmost provinces; and the patriots were conscious of his importunities. A free negro man of property, charged with the intention of piloting British ships up the channel to the city, perished on the gallows, though protesting his innocence. All who refused the association were disarmed, even though they were in the service of the crown. On the thirteenth of September, just after a full discovery of the intrigues of the governor with the country people, his arrest was proposed; yet, on the opposition of Rawlins Lowndes, the motion was defeated in the general committee by a vote

of twenty-three against sixteen; but the council of safety ordered William Moultrie, colonel of the second regiment, to take possession of Fort Johnson, on James Island. Aware of the design, the governor sent a party to throw the guns and carriages from the platform; and on the fifteenth of September, having suddenly dissolved the last royal assembly ever held in South Carolina, he fled for refuge to comfortless quarters on board the small man-of-war, the "Tamer." During the previous night, three companies commanded by Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Bernard Elliott, and Francis Marion, under Lieutenant-colonel Motte, dropped down with the ebb tide from Gadsden's Wharf, landed on James Island, and entered the fort, in which but three or four men remained. Lord William Campbell sent Innis, his secretary, in the boat of the "Tamer," to demand "by what authority they had taken possession of his majesty's fort;" and an officer appeared and answered: "We are American troops, under Lieutenant-colonel Motte; we hold the fort by the express command of the council of safety." "By whom is this message given?" Without hesitation the officer replied: "I am Charles Cotesworth Pinckney;" and the names of Motte and Pinckney figured in the next despatches of the governor. Moultrie was desired to devise a banner; and as the uniform of the colony was blue, and the first and second regiments wore on the front of their caps a silver crescent, he gave directions for a large blue flag with a crescent in the right-hand corner. A schooner was stationed between Fort Johnson and the town, to intercept the man-of-war's boats. A post was established at Haddrell's Point, and a fort on Sullivan's Island was proposed. The tents on James Island contained at least five hundred men, well armed and clad, strictly disciplined, and instructed not merely in the use of the musket, but the exercise of the great guns. The king's arsenal supplied cannon and balls. New gun-carriages were soon constructed; for the mechanics, almost to a man, were hearty in the cause. Hundreds of negro laborers were brought in from the country to assist in work. None stopped to calculate expense.

1775. July to Oct.

The courage of the Carolinians, who, from a generous sympathy with Massachusetts, met greater danger than any other province, was scoffed at by the representatives of the king as an infatuation. Martin, of North Carolina, making himself busy with the affairs of his neighbors, wrote in midsummer: "The people of South Carolina forget entirely their own weakness and are blustering treason; while Charleston, that is the head and heart of their boasted province, might be destroyed by a single frigate. In charity to them and in duty to my king and country, I give it as my sincere opinion, that the rod of correction cannot be spared." A few weeks later, Lord William Campbell chimed in with him, reckoning up the many deadly perils by which they were environed: "the Indians;" "the disaffected back country people;" their own social condition, "where their slaves were five to one;" and the power of Britain from the sea. From Charleston harbor, Campbell wrote in October: "Let it not be entirely forgot that the king has dominions in this part of America. What defence can they make? Three regiments, a proper detachment of artillery, with a couple of good frigates, some small craft, and a bomb-ketch, would do the whole business here, and go a great way to reduce Georgia and North Carolina to a sense of their duty. Charleston is the fountain-head from whence all violence flows; stop that, and the rebellion in this part of the continent will soon be at an end." 1775. July to Oct.

North Carolina, fourth among the thirteen colonies in importance, ranking next to Pennsylvania, was happy in the natural security of its position, and its comparative unanimity. In the low country, for the distance of a hundred miles from the sea, all classes were penetrated with the enthusiasm for liberty. Men whom the royalists revered as of "the first order of people in the country," of unblemished integrity and earnest character, loyal by nature, gave thoughtful consideration to the political questions in issue, and decided irrevocably against the right of the British parliament to tax the colonies. In Brunswick county, Robert Howe, formerly captain of Fort Johnston, employed himself in training the people to arms; though

Martin, the royal governor, held his military talents in light esteem. At Newbern, the capital, whose name kept in memory that its founders were emigrants from Switzerland, volunteers openly formed themselves into independent companies. Afraid of being seized, Martin, suddenly shipping his family to New York, retreated to Fort Johnston on Cape Fear River. He had repeatedly offered to raise a battalion from the Scottish Highlanders in Carolina, and declared himself sure of the allegiance of the regulators, who were weary of insurrection and scrupulous about their oaths. Again and again he importuned to be restored to his old rank in the army as lieutenant-colonel, promising the greatest consequences from such an appointment. He could not conceal that "the frenzy" had taken possession of all classes of men around him, and that the news of the affair at Lexington had universally wrought a great change, confirming the seditious, and bringing over to them vast numbers of the fickle, wavering, and unsteady multitude. Being absolutely alone, at the mercy of any handful of insurgents who should take the trouble to come after him, his braggart garrulity increased with his impotence; and, having formerly called for three thousand stand of arms, he now wrote for fourfold that number, ten thousand at least, to be sent immediately from England, with artillery, ammunition, money, some pairs of colors, and a military commission for himself; promising, with the aid of two regiments, to force a connection with the interior, and raise not the Highlanders alone, but the people of the upper country in such overwhelming numbers as to restore order in the two Carolinas, "hold Virginia in awe," and recover every colony south of Pennsylvania.

1775. July to Oct.

After the termination of the seven years' war, very few of the Highland regiment returned home; soldiers and officers choosing rather to accept grants of land in America for settlement. Many also of the inhabitants of Northwestern Scotland, especially of the clans of Macdonald and Macleod, listened to overtures from those who had obtained concessions of vast domains, and migrated to middle Carolina; tearing themselves, with bitterest grief, from kindred

whose sorrow at parting admitted no consolation. Those who went first reported favorably of the clear, sunny clime, where every man might have land of his own; the distance and the voyage lost their terrors; and from the isles of Rasay and Skye whole neighborhoods formed parties for removal, sweetening their exile by carrying with them their costume and opinions, their Celtic language and songs.

Distinguished above them all was Allan Macdonald of Kingsborough, and his wife Flora Macdonald, the same who, in the midsummer of 1746, had rescued Prince Charles Edward from his pursuers. Compelled by poverty, they had removed to North Carolina in 1774, and made their new home in the west of Cumberland county. She was now about fifty-five, mother of many children, of middle stature, soft features, "uncommonly mild and gentle manners, and elegant presence." Her husband was aged, but still with hair jet black, of a stately figure, and a countenance that expressed intelligence and steadfastness. On the third of July he came down to Fort Johnston, and concerted with Martin the raising a battalion of "the good and faithful Highlanders," in which he was himself to be major, and Alexander Macleod, an officer of marines on half-pay, was to be the first captain. They were to wait the proper moment to take the field; but the design, though secretly devised, did not remain concealed; and rumor added a purpose of inviting the negroes to rise. 1775. July to Oct.

The spirit of resistance, quickened by the tidings which came in from Bunker Hill, extended itself more and more widely and deeply. On the waters of Albemarle Sound, over which the adventurous skiffs of the first settlers of Carolina had glided before the waters of the Chesapeake were known to Englishmen, the movement was assisted by the writings of young James Iredell, from England; by the letters and counsels of Joseph Hewes; and by the calm wisdom of Samuel Johnston of Edenton, a native of Dundee in Scotland, a man revered for his integrity, thoroughly opposed to disorder and to revolution, if revolution could be avoided without yielding to oppression. The last provincial congress had invested him contingently with power

to call a new one; on the tenth of July, he issued his summons to the people of North Carolina to elect their delegates. But, two days later, Dartmouth wrote from the king: "I hope that in North Carolina the governor may not be reduced to the disgraceful necessity of seeking protection on board the king's ships;" and just then Martin slunk away from land, and took refuge on board the "Cruiser." On the eighteenth, a party, encouraged by the presence of John Ashe and Cornelius Harnett, set the fort on fire before his face, and within reach of the guns of the man-of-war.

1775. July to Oct.

As soon as the deliberations at Philadelphia would permit, Richard Caswell, a delegate to the general congress, hastened home to promote a convention, and to quicken the daring spirit of his constituents. He had with reluctance admitted the necessity of American resistance; but, having once chosen his part, he advocated the most resolute conduct, and even censured the Newbern committee for allowing the governor to escape.

On the twenty-first of August, the people of North Carolina assembled at Hillsborough in a convention, composed of more than one hundred and eighty members. A spirit of moderation controlled and guided their zeal; Caswell proposed Samuel Johnston as president, and he was unanimously elected. In a vituperative, incoherent proclamation, Martin had warned them against their assembling, as tending to unnatural rebellion; they, in their reply, voted his proclamation "a false and seditious libel," and ordered it to be burnt by the common hangman. They professed allegiance to the king, but in the plainest words avowed the purpose to resist parliamentary taxation "to the utmost." They resolved that the people of the province, singly and collectively, were bound by the acts of the continental and provincial congresses, because in both they were represented by persons chosen by themselves. The religious and political scruples of the regulators were removed by a conference. The intrigue of Martin with the Highlanders was divulged by Farquhard Campbell; and a committee, on which were many Scots, urged them, not

wholly without success, to unite with the other inhabitants of America in defence of rights derived from God and the constitution. The meditated resistance involved the institution of government; a treasury, which for the time was supplied by an emission of paper money; the purchase of ammunition and arms; an imbodying of a regular force of one thousand men; an organization of the militia of the colony; an annual provincial congress to be elected by all freeholders; a committee of safety for each of the six districts into which the province was divided; a provincial council, consisting of the president of the convention and two members from each of the six divisions, as the great executive power. Richard Caswell, who, for the combined powers of wisdom and action, stands high among the patriots of North Carolina, was detained by the people for service at home; and John Penn, a Virginian by birth, became his successor in the general congress.

1775. July to Oct.

The most remarkable subject brought before the convention was Franklin's plan of a confederacy, which, on the twenty-fourth of August, was introduced by William Hooper; like Franklin, a native of Boston; trained under James Otis to the profession of the law; now a resident in Wilmington, "the region of politeness and hospitality," of commerce, wealth, and culture. The convention listened with ready sympathy to the proposition, though it included a system of independence and government, and it was about to be adopted; but, in the committee of the whole house, the moderating prudence of Johnston interposed, and persuaded North Carolina to forego the honor of being the first to declare for a permanent federal union. On Monday the fourth of September, it was voted, but not unanimously, that a general confederation ought only to be adopted in the last necessity, and then only after consultation with the provincial congress. Hooper acquiesced; and the house adopted unanimously his draft of an address to the inhabitants of the British empire, disavowing the desire of independence, consenting to the continuance of the old regulation of trade, and asking only to be restored to the state existing before 1763.

On the eighteenth of October, the provincial council held its first meeting. Among its members were Samuel Johnston; Samuel Ashe, a man whose integrity even his enemies never questioned, whose name a mountain county and the fairest town in the western part of the commonwealth keep in memory; Abner Nash, an eminent lawyer, described by Martin as "the oracle of the committee of Newbern, and a principal promoter of sedition;" but on neither of these three did the choice of president fall; that office of peril and power was bestowed unanimously on Cornelius Harnett of New Hanover, whose disinterested zeal had made him honored as the Samuel Adams of North Carolina.

1775. July to Oct. Thus prepared, the people of that colony looked towards the future with dignity and fearlessness. The continent, still refusing to perceive the impending necessity of independence, awaited the answer to its last petition to the king.

CHAPTER XLVII.

EFFECT OF BUNKER HILL BATTLE IN EUROPE.

JULY 25—AUGUST, 1775.

DURING the first weeks of July, the king contemplated America with complacency; assured that, in New York, his loyal subjects formed the majority, that in Virginia the rebels could be held in check by setting upon them savages and slaves. Ships were to be sent at once; and, if they did not reduce the country, the soldiery would finish the work at the very worst in one more campaign. Alone of the ministers, Lord North was ill at ease. Neither the court, nor the ministers, nor the people at large had as yet taken a real alarm. Even Edmund Burke, who, as the agent of New York, had access to exact information and foresaw an engagement at Boston, believed that Gage, from his discipline and artillery as well as his considerable numbers, would beat "the raw American troops," and succeed. An hour before noon of the twenty-fifth, tidings of the Bunker Hill battle reached the cabinet, and spread rapidly through the kingdom and through Europe. "Two more such victories," said Vergennes, "and England will have no army left in America." The great loss of officers in the battle saddened the anticipations of future triumphs; the ministry confessed the unexampled intrepidity of the rebels; many persons from that time believed that the contest would end in their independence; but difficulties only animated the king; no one equalled him in ease, composure, and even gayety. He would have twenty thousand regular soldiers in America by the next spring. Barrington, the secretary at war, entreated the secretary of state to give "no expectation of the kind in the despatches going out to the colonies;" and he wrote plainly to his sovereign: "The proposed augmentation cannot possibly be raised, and ought

1775. July.

not to be depended on." But George III. resolved at any cost to accomplish his purpose.

1775. Aug. Gage was recalled, though without official censure. The command in America was divided, and assigned in Canada to Carleton, in the old colonies to Howe. Ten thousand pounds and an additional supply of three thousand arms were forwarded to Quebec; and, notwithstanding the caution of Barrington, word was sent to Carleton that it was "hoped the next spring to have in North America an army of twenty thousand men, exclusive of the Canadians and Indians." The first contribution was made by the king as elector of Hanover; nor did he drive a hard bargain with the British treasury; his predecessor, through Newcastle, took so much for the loan of Hanoverian troops that no account of the payment could be found; George III. asked only the reimbursement of all expenses. His agent, Colonel William Faucitt, leaving England early in August, stopped at the Hague just long enough to confer with Sir Joseph Yorke on getting further assistance in Holland and Germany, and straightway repaired to Hanover to muster and receive into the service of Great Britain five battalions of electoral infantry. They consisted of two thousand three hundred and fifty men, who were to be employed in the garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca, and thus to disengage an equal number of British troops for service in America. The recruiting officers of Frederic of Prussia and of other princes environed the frontier with the express design of tempting them to desert; for they were supposed to have an aversion for the sea. The port of Ritzebüttel, near the mouth of the Elbe, in the territory of Hamburg, was selected as the place of their embarkation, which was courteously promoted by the senate of that republic. It was the fifth of October before they were on board the transports, and then a constant south-west wind locked them up till the first of November.

Three days after the arrival of the news of the Charlestown battle, Rochford, the secretary of state, called the attention of De Guines, the French ambassador, to the dispute with the colonies; and remarked that "many persons

of both parties were thoroughly persuaded that the way to terminate the war in America was to declare war against France." De Guines suppressed every sign of indignation or of surprise, and encouraged the secretary's communicativeness. It was declared to be the English opinion that England now, as before the last peace, was a match for Spain and France united; that, in the event of a war with those powers, America, through fear of the recovery of Canada by France, would give up her contest and side with England. Rochford repeated these remarks to the Spanish minister, from indiscretion, or in the hope to intimidate the two courts; but, as the ministry had no object so dear as that of keeping their places, it followed that, if the nation should clamor for an attack on the house of Bourbon, they would at once become belligerent. The subject was calmly revolved by Vergennes, who was unable to imagine how sensible people could regard a war with France as a harbor of refuge; especially as her marine, which had been almost annihilated, was restored. "The English cabinet is greatly mistaken," said he, "if it thinks we regret Canada; it may come to pass that they will themselves repent having made its acquisition." He felt the need of exact information on the state of opinion in America. For that end, accident offered a most trusty agent in De Bonvouloir, a French gentleman, cousin-german to the Marquis de Lambert, a man of good judgment and impenetrable secrecy. He had been driven from St. Domingo by the climate, had returned by way of the English colonies, had, at Philadelphia, New York, Providence, and near Boston, become acquainted with insurgent Americans; and he reported that in America every man was turned soldier, that all the world crowded to the camp of liberty. The proposition to send him back to America was submitted by the ambassador at London through Vergennes to Louis XVI., who consented. Here is the beginning of his intervention in the American revolution. Neither his principles nor his sentiments inclined him to aid rebellion; but the danger of an attack from the English was held before his eyes, and on the seventh of August Ver- 1775. Aug.

gennes could reply to De Guines: "Be assured, sir, the king very much approves sending Bonvouloir with such precaution that we can in no event be compromised by his mission. His instructions should be verbal, and confined to the two most essential objects: the one, to make to you a faithful report of events and of the prevailing disposition of the public mind; the other, to secure the Americans against that jealousy of us, with which so much pains will be taken to inspire them. Canada is for them the object of distrust: they must be made to understand that we do not think of it at all; and that, far from envying them the liberty and independence which they labor to secure, we admire the nobleness and the grandeur of their efforts, have no interest to injure them, and shall with pleasure see happy circumstances place them at liberty to frequent our ports; the facilities that they will find there for their commerce will soon prove to them our esteem." With these instructions, Bonvouloir repaired to the Low Countries, and, after some delay, found at Antwerp an opportunity of embarking for the colonies. His report might open the way for relations and events of the utmost importance. Yet all the while the means of pacifying America were so obvious that Vergennes was hardly able to persuade himself they could be missed by the English ministers. The folly imputed to them was so great, and was so sure to involve the loss of their possessions, that he called in question the accounts which he had received. The ambassador replied: "You say what you think ought to be done; but the king of England is the most obstinate prince alive, and his ministers will never adopt the policy necessary in a great crisis, for fear of compromising their safety or their places."

1775. Aug.

The affairs of the United Colonies were at that time under discussion in the heart of the Russian empire, the ancient city of Moscow, at the court of Catharine II. The ruling opinion in Russia demanded the concentration of all power in one hand. From the moment the empress set her foot on Russian soil, it became her fixed purpose to seize the absolute sway and govern alone. Though she

mixed trifling pastime with application to business, and for her recreation sought the company of the young and the very gay, she far excelled those around her in industry and knowledge. Frederic said of her, that she had an infinity of talent and no religion; yet, after going over to the Greek church, she played the devotee. There was in her nature a mixture of fancy and calculation. Distinguished for vivacity of thought and judgment, for the most laborious attention to affairs, capable of prompt energy and of patient waiting, very proud of the greatness and power of her empire, her intercourse with all her subjects was marked by mildness and grace; and she made almost incredible exertions as a monarch to be useful even to the meanest, to benefit the future as well as the present age. She had known sorrow, and could feel for and relieve distress. She translated Marmontel's Belisarius into Russian as a lesson of toleration, relieved the poverty of Diderot by a lasting provision, and invited D'Alembert to superintend the education of her son who was to be her successor; one day she proposed to the imperial academy the question of the emancipation of serfs; and she suffered the printing of a dissertation having for its motto, "In favorem libertatis omnia jura clamant," "All rights cry out for freedom." Tragedy, comedy, music, wearied her; she had no taste but to build, or to regulate her court; no ambition but to rule and to make a great name; and this led her to undertake too much herself without sufficient aid from her ministers. In the crowd of courtiers, who were all eager for advancement and favor, she compared herself to a hare worried by many hounds; and among an unscrupulous nobility, in a land which was not that of her birth, she was haunted by a feeling of insecurity, and revealed a secret unrest and discontent of soul. But those around her were not offended at the completeness with which she belonged to a century representing the supremacy of the senses; the spiritual life that diffused itself over her form, the blandishments of her manner, the smiles on her face, the flowers on her breast, covered fiery passions that still in her mature age coursed riotously through her veins.

1775. Aug.

Her first minister was Panin, without whom no council was held, no decision taken in foreign or domestic affairs. He alone could effectually promote her schemes of administrative greatness; though he was more persistent than bold, and was guided by experience rather than comprehensive views. With the faults of pride, inflexibility, and dilatoriness, he also had incorruptness; and he was acknowledged to be the fittest man for his post. At home, his political principles led him to desire some limitation of the power of the sovereign by a council of nobles; towards foreign states he was free from rancor. It had been the policy of France to save Poland by stirring up Sweden and Turkey against Russia; yet Panin did not misjudge the relations of Russia to France. Nor was he blinded by love for England; he wanted no treaty with her except with stipulations for aid in the contingency of a war with the Ottoman Porte, and, as that condition could not be obtained, he always declined her alliance. His weak side was vanity; and Frederic of Prussia was said to have chained him to his interests by frequent presents of small value, and autograph letters filled with delicate flatteries. But Panin was thoroughly a Russian statesman; and, to win his favor, Frederic submitted to promise subsidies against Turkey.

1775. Aug.

The British minister relied on the good-will of Alexis Orloff, who had been a principal person in raising Catharine to the throne; but his influence was on the wane, and his brother, who remained for about ten years her favorite concubine, had been recently superseded and dismissed from the court.

His successor was Potemkin, who, to the person of a Titan and the impersonation of all the great aspirations of his countrymen, joined a resolute ambition, and a commanding will, that became terrible to the empress herself; so that, when she released him from her bed, she found herself more and more subject to his control in the administration. Never did a favorite rise so rapidly, but at this time he cultivated the greatest intimacy with Panin, whose opinion he professed to follow.

The indifference of the king of Prussia on the relation of England to her colonies extended to the court of Moscow, and the Russian ministers never spoke of the strife but as likely to end in American independence. Yet this coolness was not perceived by the British minister. One day, Panin inquired of him the news; remembering his instructions, Gunning seized the moment to answer that the measures in progress would shortly end the rebellion in America; then, as if hurried by excess of zeal to utter an idle, unauthorized speculation of his own, he asked leave to acquaint his king that, "in case the circumstances of affairs should render any foreign forces necessary, he might reckon upon a body of her imperial majesty's infantry." On the morning of the eighth of August, Panin reported the answer of the empress. Nothing was said specifically about troops, still less of placing Russian battalions under the command of a British general, or despatching them across the Atlantic; but she gave the strongest assurance of her entire readiness, from gratitude for favors received from England during her last war, upon this and upon every other occasion, to give the British king assistance, in whatever manner he thought proper. She charged Panin to repeat her very words, that "she found in herself an innate affection for the British nation which she should always cherish." The unobserving envoy drank in the words with delight and interpreted a woman's lavish sentimentality as a promise of twenty thousand men to be forwarded from Asia and Eastern Europe to America.

The reply to Bunker Hill from England reached Washington before the end of September; and the manifest determination of the ministers to push the war by sea and land with the utmost vigor removed from his mind every doubt of the necessity of independence. Such, also, was the conclusion of Greene; and the army was impatient when any of the chaplains prayed for the king. The general congress had less sagacity. It should have assembled on the fifth of September; but for eight days there were too few delegates for the transaction of business. 1775. Sept.

The war developed the germ of a state that was to include

both slopes of the Green Mountains, whose people, though not yet formally released from the jurisdiction of New York, fought with the army of the continent under officers of their own election. From the other new commonwealth which was rising on the west of Virginia, an agent soon presented himself. The adventurers in that region spread the fame of its healthful climate, its ranges for all kinds of game, and the miraculous fertility of the soil where underlaid by limestone; and they foretold the great city that was to rise at the falls of the Ohio. Their representative discussed in private the foundation on which the swiftly growing settlements of Kentucky should rest, and received advice from their northern well-wishers to reserve that "most agreeable country" for the free. The territorial claim of Virginia barred against him the doors of congress, but the affection of the west flowed in a full current towards the union.

1775. Sept.

The "inexpressibly distressing" situation of Washington demanded instant attention; but the bias of the continental congress was to inactivity. The intercepted letters of John Adams, in which he had freely unbosomed his complaints of its tardiness, and had justly thrown blame on "the piddling genius," as he phrased it, of Dickinson, were approved by many; but Dickinson himself was unforgiving; wounded in his self-love and vexed by the ridicule thrown on his policy, from this time he resisted independence with a morbid fixedness. He brushed past John Adams in the street without returning his salutation; and the New England statesman encountered the hostility of the proprietary party, of social opinion in Philadelphia, and of some of the delegates from the south. At times, an "unhappy jealousy of New England" broke forth; but when a member insinuated distrust of its people, "as artful and designing men, altogether pursuing selfish purposes," Gadsden, of South Carolina, said in their defence: "I only wish we would imitate instead of abusing them. I thank God we have such a systematic body of men, as an asylum that honest men may resort to in the time of their last distress, if driven out of their own states; so far from being under any apprehensions, I bless God there is such a people in America."

From Pittsburg, Lewis Morris of New York and James Wilson of Pennsylvania, the commissioners, recommended an expedition to take Detroit: the proposal, after a full discussion, was rejected; but the invasion of Canada, by way of the Chaudière and of Isle-aux-Noix, was approved; and delegates from a convention of the several parishes of Canada would have been a welcome accession. Much time was spent in wrangling about small expenditures. The prohibition by parliament of the fisheries of New England, and the restriction on the trade of the southern colonies, went into effect on the twentieth of July: as a measure of counteraction, the ports of America should have been thrown open; but, though secret directions were given for importing powder and arms from "the foreign West Indies," the committee on trade was not appointed till the twenty-second of September; and then, day after day, they hesitated to act. The prospect of financial ruin led De Hart, of New Jersey, to propose to do away with issuing paper money by the provincial conventions and assemblies; but no one seconded him. The boundary line between Virginia and Pennsylvania was debated, as well as the right of Connecticut to Wyoming. The roll of the army at Cambridge had, from its first formation, borne the names of men of color, but as yet without legislative approval. On the twenty-sixth, Edward Rutledge, of South Carolina, moved the discharge of all the negroes in the army, and he was strongly supported by many of the southern delegates; but the opposition was so determined that "he lost his point."

At length came a letter from Washington, implying his sense that the neglect of congress had brought matters in his army to a crisis. Not powder and artillery only were wanting, but fuel, shelter, clothing, provisions, and the soldiers' pay; and, while a great part of the troops were not free from mutiny, by the terms of their enlistment all of them, except the riflemen, were to be disbanded in December. For this state of things, congress could provide no adequate remedy. On the thirtieth of September, they therefore appointed Franklin, Lynch, and Harrison a committee to repair to the camp, and, with the New England

1775. Sept.

colonies and Washington, to devise a method for renovating the army.

1775. Oct. While the committee were on the way, Gage, on the tenth of October, embarked for England, bearing with him the large requirements of Howe, which he warmly seconded. The king, the ministers, public opinion in England, had made very free with his reputation; but, on his arrival, he was allowed to wear a bolder front than he had shown in Massachusetts, and was dismissed into retirement with high rank and its emoluments. To Howe, the new commander in chief, the ministers had sent instructions, which permitted and advised the transfer of the war to New York; but, from the advanced state of the season and the want of sufficient transports, he decided to winter at Boston.

On the fifteenth of October, the committee from congress arrived at the camp. Franklin, who was its soul, brought with him the conviction that the American people, though they might be made to suffer, could never be beaten into submission; that a separation from Britain was inevitable. His presence in the camp, within sight of his native town, was welcomed with affectionate veneration. "During the whole evening," wrote Greene, "I viewed that very great man with silent admiration." With Washington for the military chief, with Franklin for the leading adviser from congress, the conference with the New England commissioners, notwithstanding all difficulties, harmoniously devised a scheme for forming, governing, and supplying a new army of about twenty-three thousand men, whom the general was authorized to enlist without delay. The proposed arrangements, in all their details, had the aspect of an agreement between the army, the continental congress, and the New England colonies; their successful execution depended on those four colonies alone.

After the conference broke up, the committee remained two days, to advise with the general on every unsettled question. On this occasion, Franklin confirmed that affection, confidence, and veneration, which Washington bore him to the last moment of his life.

Franklin was still at the camp, when news from Maine confirmed his interpretation of the purposes of the British. In the previous May, Mowat, a naval officer, had been held prisoner for a few hours at Falmouth, now Portland; and we have seen Linzee, in a sloop-of-war, driven with loss from Gloucester; it was one of the last acts of Gage to plan with the admiral how to wreak vengeance on the inhabitants of both those ports. The design against Gloucester was never carried out; but Mowat, in a ship of sixteen guns, attended by three other vessels, went up the harbor of Portland, and after a short parley, at half-past nine, on the morning of the sixteenth of October, began to fire upon the town. In five minutes, several houses were in a blaze; parties of marines landed to spread the conflagration by hand. All sea-going vessels were burnt except two, which were carried away. The cannonade was kept up till after dark; St. Paul's church, the public buildings, and about one hundred and thirty dwelling-houses, three fourths of the whole, were burnt down; those that remained standing were shattered by balls and shells. By the English account, the destruction was still greater. At the opening of a severe winter, the inhabitants were turned adrift in poverty and misery. The wrath of Washington was justly kindled at these "savage cruelties," this new "exertion of despotic barbarity." "Death and destruction mark the footsteps of the enemy," said Greene; "fight or be slaves is the American motto; and the first is by far the most eligible." Sullivan was sent to fortify Portsmouth; Trumbull, of Connecticut, took thought for the defence of New London.

In the congress at Philadelphia, so long as there remained the dimmest hope of favor to its petition, the lukewarm patriots had the advantage. On the third of October, one of the delegates of Rhode Island laid before congress their instructions to use their whole influence for building, equipping, and employing an American fleet. It was the origin of our navy. The proposal met great opposition; but John Adams engaged in it heartily, and pursued it unremittingly, though "for a long time against wind and tide." On the fifth, Washington was authorized to employ two

1775. Oct.

armed vessels to intercept British store-ships, bound for Quebec; on the thirteenth, congress voted two armed vessels, of ten and of fourteen guns, and, seventeen days later, two others of thirty-six guns. But much time would pass before their equipment; as yet no court had power to sanction "the condemnation of vessels taken from the enemy," nor was war waged on the high sea, nor reprisals authorized, nor the ports opened to foreign nations.

1775. Oct. On the sixteenth, the day on which Mowat anchored below Falmouth, the new legislature of Pennsylvania was organized. Chosen under a dread of independence, all of its members who were present subscribed the usual engagements of allegiance to the king. In a few days the Quakers presented an address, in favor of "the most conciliatory measures," and deprecating every thing "likely to widen or perpetuate the breach with their parent state." To counteract this movement, the committee for the city and liberties of Philadelphia, sixty-six in number, headed by George Clymer and Mackean, went two by two to the state house, and delivered their remonstrance; but the spirit of the assembly, under the guidance of Dickinson, followed the bent of the Quakers.

Congress, for the time, was like a ship at sea without a rudder, water-logged, and rolling and tossing with every wave. One day would bring measures for the defence of New York and Hudson River, or for the invasion of Canada; the next, nothing was to be done that could further irritate Great Britain. The continuance of the army around Boston depended on the efficiency of all the New England provinces; of these, New Hampshire was without a government. On the eighteenth of October, her delegates asked, in her behalf, that the general congress would sanction her instituting a government, as the only means of preventing the greatest confusion; yet the majority of that body let the month run out before giving an answer, for they still dreamed of conciliation and of the good effects of their last petition to the king.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE QUESTION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND AMERICA.

AUGUST, 1775.

THE chronicler of manners and events can alone measure his own fairness, for no one else knows so well what he throws aside. The greatest poet of action has brought upon the stage the panorama of mortal being, without once finding occasion to delineate a faultless hero. No man that lives has not sinned. Indiscriminate praise neither paints to the life, nor teaches by example, nor advances social science; history is no mosaic of funeral eulogies and family epitaphs, nor can the hand of truth sketch character without shadows as well as light. The crimes and the follies which stand in the line of causes of revolution, or modify the development of a state, or color the morals of an age, must be brought up for judgment; and yet the humane student of his race, in his searches into the past, contemplates more willingly those inspirations of the beautiful and the good, which lift the soul above the interests of the moment, illustrate our affinity with something higher than ourselves, point the way to principles that are eternal, and constitute the vital element of progress. 1775. Aug.

From immeasurable distances in the material universe, the observer of the stars brings back word that the physical forces which rule our neighborhood maintain an all-pervading energy; and the records imbedded in the rocks, teaching how countless myriads of seasons have watched the sun go forth daily from his chamber, and the earth turn on its axis, and the sea ebb and flow, demonstrate that the same physical forces have exerted their power without change for unnumbered periods of bygone years. The twin sciences of

the stars and of the earth establish the cosmical unity of the material universe in all that we can know of time and space. But the conception of the perfect order and unity of creation does not unfold itself in its beauty and grandeur, so long as the guiding presence of intelligence is not apprehended. From the depths of man's consciousness, which envelops sublimer truths than the firmament over his head can reveal to his senses, rises the idea of right; and history, testing that idea by observation, traces the vestiges of moral law through the practice of the nations in every age, proves experimentally the reality of justice, and confirms by induction the intuitions of reason.

1775. Aug. The historian, even more than philosophers and naturalists, must bring to his pursuit the freedom of an unbiassed mind; in his case, the submission of reason to prejudice would have a deeper criminality; for he cannot neglect to be impartial without at once falsifying nature and denying providence. The exercise of candor is possible; for the world of action has its organization, and is obedient to law. The forces that constitute its antagonisms are very few, and are always and everywhere present, and are always and everywhere the same, though they make their appearance under many shapes. Human nature is for ever identical with itself; and the state ever contains in its own composition all the opposite tendencies which constitute parties. The problems of politics cannot be solved without passing behind transient forms to efficient causes; the old theories, founded on the distinction of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, must give place to an analysis of the faculties in man, and the unvarying conditions, principles, and inherent wants out of which the forms of government have been evolved; and it will be found that as every class of vertebrate animals has the forms of the same organs, so an exact generalization establishes the existence of every element of civil polity, and of the rudiments of all its possible varieties and divisions in every stage of human being.

Society is many and is one; and the organic unity of the state is to be reconciled with the separate existence of each of its members. Law which restrains all, and freedom

which inheres in each individual, and the mediation which adjusts and connects these two conflicting powers, are ever present as constituent ingredients; each of which, in its due proportion, is essential to the well-being of a state, and is ruinous when it passes its bounds. It has been said that the world is governed too much; no statesman has ever said that there should be no government at all. Anarchy is at one extreme; and the pantheistic despotism, which is the absorption of the people into one man as the sovereign, at the other. All governments contain the two opposite tendencies; and were either attraction or repulsion, central power or individuality, to disappear, civil order would be crushed or dissolved. 1775. Aug.

The state has always for its life-giving principle the idea of right; the condition of facts can never perfectly represent that idea; and, unless this antagonism also is reconciled, no durable constitution can be formed, and government totters of itself to its fall, or is easily overthrown. Here, then, is another cause of division; one party clings to tradition, and another demands reform; the fanatics for conservatism are met by enthusiasts for ideal freedom, while there is always an effort to bring the established order into a nearer harmony with the eternal law of justice. These principles have manifested their power in every country at every stage of its existence, and must be respected, or society will perish in chaotic confusion or a stagnant calm.

The duty of impartiality in accounting for political conflicts is then made easy, if behind every party there lies what an English poet has called "an eternal thought," and if the generating cause of every party, past or present or hereafter possible, is a force which never disappears, which in its proper proportion is essential to the well-being of society, and which turns into a poison only in its excess. It may take a diversity of names as it comes into flower respectively among savages or the civilized, in kingdoms, in empires, or in republics; yet every party has its origin in human nature and the necessities of life in a community.

To fail in impartiality with regard to men, is not merely at variance with right; it is also sure to defeat itself. The

fame which shines only in an eclipse of that of others is necessarily transitory; the eclipse soon passes away and the brighter light recovers its lustre. The biographer, who constructs the road to the monument of his idol over the graves of the reputation of great men, will find the best part of his race refusing to travel it. Besides, superior merit, to be discerned, must be surrounded by the meritorious; the glory of the noblest genius of his age would be sacrificed by detracting from the ability of his antagonists, his competitors, and his associates. Real worth delights to be environed by the worthy; it is serene, and can be duly estimated only by the serene.

1775. Aug. The idea of humanity, which, by its ever increasing clearness, furnishes the best evidence of the steady melioration of the race, teaches to judge with equity the reciprocal relations of states. The free development of all inherent powers is the common aim, and the acknowledgment of the universal right to that free development is the bond of unity. Between Britain and the new empire which she founded, the duty of impartiality belongs equally to the men of the two countries; but experience has shown that it is practised with most difficulty by those of the parent land. The moral world knows only one rule of right; but men in their pride create differences among themselves. The ray from the eternal source of justice suffers a deflection, as it falls from absolute princes on their subjects, from an established church on heretics, from masters of slaves on men in bondage, from hereditary nobles on citizens and peasants, from a privileged caste on an oppressed one. Something of this perverseness of pride has prevailed in the metropolitan state towards its colonies; it is stamped indelibly on the statute-book of Great Britain, where all may observe and measure its intensity. That same pride ruled without check in the palace, and was little restrained in the house of lords; it broke forth in the conduct of the administration and its subordinates; it tinged the British colonial state papers of the last century so thoroughly that historians who should follow them implicitly as guides would be as erroneous in their facts as the ministers of

that day were in their policy. This haughty feeling has so survived the period of revolutionary strife that to this day it sometimes hangs as a heavy bias on the judgment even of Englishmen professing liberal opinions. The Americans more easily recovered their equanimity. They intended resistance to a trifling tax and a preamble, and they won peace with liberty; the vastness of the acquisition effaced the remembrance of a transient attempt at oppression, and left no rankling discontent behind. The tone of our writers has often been deferentially forbearing; those of our countrymen who have written most fully of the war of our revolution brought to their task no prejudices against England, and, while they gladly recall the relations of kindred, no one of them has written a line with gall.

Nor are citizens of a republic most tempted to evil speaking of kings and nobles; it takes men of the privileged class to scandalize their peers and princes without stint. The shameless slanders which outrage nature in the exaggerations of the profligacy of courts have usually originated within palaces, and been repeated by men of rank; American writers have no motive to take them up; the land of equality recognises sovereigns and aristocrats as men, and places them under the protection of the tribunal of humanity. 1775. Aug.

The Americans, entering most reluctantly on a war with Britain, preserved an instinctive feeling that the relations of affinity were suspended rather than destroyed; they held themselves called to maintain "the rights of mankind," the liberties of the English people, as well as their own; they never looked upon the transient ministers who were their oppressors as the type of the parent country. The moment approaches when the king proclaimed his irrevocable decision; to understand that decision, it is necessary to state precisely the question at issue.

The administration of numerous colonies, each of which had a representative government of its own, was conducted with inconvenience from a want of unity; in war, experience showed a difficulty in obtaining proportionate aid from them all; in peace, the crown officers were impatient

of owing their support to the periodical votes of colonial legislatures. To remedy this seeming evil by a concentration of power, James II. usurped all authority over the country north of the Potomac, and designed to consolidate and govern it by his own despotic will.

1775. Aug.

The Revolution of 1688 restored to the colonies their representative governments, and the collision between the crown officers and the colonial legislatures was renewed; threats of parliamentary intervention were sometimes heard; but for nearly three quarters of a century no minister had been willing to gratify the pertinacious entreaties of placemen by disturbing America in the enjoyment of her liberties.

Soon after the accession of George III., the king, averse to governing so many prosperous and free and loyal colonies by consent, resolved, through the paramount power of parliament, to introduce a new colonial system, which Halifax, Bedford, and especially Charles Townshend, had matured, and which was to have sufficient vigor to control the unwilling. First, the charter governments were to be reduced to one uniform direct dependence on the king, by the abolition of the jurisdiction of the proprietaries in Maryland and Pennsylvania, and by the alteration or repeal of the charters of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Secondly, for the pay of the crown officers, the British parliament was to establish in each colony a permanent civil list, independent of the assemblies, so that every branch of the judicial and executive government should be wholly of the king's appointment and at the king's will. Thirdly, the British parliament was, by its own act of taxation, to levy on the colonies a revenue towards maintaining their military establishment. Townshend, as the head of the board of trade, was unfolding the plan in the house of commons just before Bute retired.

The execution of the design fell to George Grenville. Now Grenville conceived himself to be a whig of the straitest sect, for he believed implicitly in the absolute power of parliament, and this belief he regarded as the great principle of the Revolution of 1688. He was pleased with the thought of moulding the whole empire into closer unity by means of

parliamentary taxation; but his regard for vested rights forbade him to consent to a wilful abrogation of charters. The Americans complained to him that a civil list raised by the British parliament would reduce the colonial assemblies to a nullity; Grenville saw the justice of the objection, disclaimed the purpose, dropped that part of the plan, and proposed to confine the use of the parliamentary revenue to the expenses of the military establishment. The colonists again interposed with the argument that, by the theory of the British constitution, taxation and representation are inseparable correlatives; to this Grenville listened, and answered that in parliament, as the common council, the whole empire was represented collectively, though not distributively; but that as in Britain some reform by an increase of the number of voters was desirable, so taxation of the colonies ought to be followed by a special colonial representation; and, with this theory of constitutional law, he passed the stamp act. 1775. Aug.

When a difference at court drove Grenville from office, his theory lost its importance; for no party in England or America undertook its support. The new ministers by whom his colonial policy was to be changed had the option between repealing the tax as an act of justice to the colonies, or repealing it as a measure of expediency to Britain. The first was the choice of Pitt, and its adoption would have ended the controversy; the second was that of Rockingham. He abolished the tax, and sent over assurances of his friendship; but his declaratory act established, as the rule for the judiciary and the law of the empire, that the legislative power of parliament reached to the colonies in all cases whatsoever. This declaration opened the whole question of the nature of representation, and foreshadowed a revolution or peaceful reform in America and in England. In 1688, the assertion of the paramount power of parliament against a king who would have sequestered all legislative liberty was a principle of freedom; but, in the eighteenth century, the assertion of the absolute power of a parliament acting in concert with the king was to frame an instrument of tyranny. The colonies denied the unqualified authority

of a legislature in which they were not represented; and, when they were told that they were as much represented as nine tenths of the people of Britain, the British people, enlightened by the discussion, from that day complained unceasingly of the inadequateness of a parliament in whose election nine tenths of them had no voice whatever.

1775. Aug.

The reform for England was long deferred; the issue was precipitated upon America. In the very next year, Charles Townshend, resuming the system which he had advocated in the administration of Bute, proposed a parliamentary tax to be collected in America on tea, glass, paper, and painters' colors, and introduced the tax by a preamble, asserting that "it is expedient that a revenue should be raised in his majesty's dominions in America for defraying the charge of the administration of justice and support of civil government, and towards further defraying the expenses of defending the said dominions." Grenville had proposed taxes for the defence of the colonies; Townshend's preamble promised an ever increasing American civil list, independent of American assemblies, to be disposed of by ministers at their discretion for salaries, gifts, or pensions. Here lay the seeds of a grievance indefinite in its extent, taking from the colonies all control over public officers, and introducing a government to be administered for the benefit of office-holders, without regard to the rights and liberties and welfare of the people.

Just as Townshend had intrenched the system in the statute-book, he died, and left behind him no great English statesman for its steadfast upholder; while the colonies were unanimous in resisting the innovation, and avoided the taxes by stopping imports from Britain. The government gave way, and repealed all Townshend's taxes except on tea. Of that duty Lord North maintained that it was no innovation, but a reduction of the ancient duty of a shilling a pound to one of threepence only; and that the change of the place where the duty was to be collected was no more than a regulation of trade to prevent smuggling tea from Holland. The statement, so far as the tax was

concerned, was unanswerable; but the sting of the tax act lay in its preamble: Rockingham's declaratory act affirmed the power of parliament in all cases whatsoever; Townshend's preamble declared the expediency of using that power to raise a very large colonial revenue. Still, collision was practically averted; for the Americans, in their desire for peace, gave up the importation of tea. 1775. Aug.

At this, the king, against the opinion of Lord North and of the East India company, directed that company itself to export tea to America, and there to pay the duty, hoping that a low price would tempt Americans to buy. But the colonists would not suffer the tea to be exposed for sale; the crown officers yielded to their unanimous resistance everywhere except at Boston, and there the tea was thrown overboard.

To close the port of Boston and require an indemnity for the East India company's loss, was the advice of Hutchinson, and neither New York, nor Pennsylvania, nor Virginia would have supported a refusal to such a requisition; but the king and the Bedford party seized the occasion to carry into effect part of their cherished system, and changed by act of parliament the charter granted by William and Mary to Massachusetts. The object of the change was the compression of popular power in favor of the prerogative. The measure could bring no advantage to Britain, and really had nothing to recommend it; to the people of Massachusetts and to the people of all the colonies, submission to the change seemed an acknowledgment of the absolute power of parliament over liberty and property in America. The people of Massachusetts resisted; the king answered: "Blows must decide." A congress of the colonies approved the conduct of Massachusetts; parliament pledged itself to the king. In 1773, a truce was possible: after the alteration of the charter of Massachusetts, in 1774, America would have been pacified by a simple repeal of obnoxious acts; in 1775, after blood had been shed at Lexington, some security for the future was needed.

British statesmen of all schools but Chatham's affirmed

the power of parliament to tax America; America denied that it could be rightfully taxed by a body in which it was not represented, for taxation and representation were inseparable. British politicians rejoined that taxation was but an act of legislation; that, therefore, to deny to parliament the right of taxation was to deny to parliament all right of legislation for the colonies, even for the regulation of trade. To this America made answer that, in reason and truth, representation and legislation are inseparable; that the colonies, being entitled to English freedom, were not bound by any act of a body to which they did not send members; that in theory the colonies were independent of the British parliament; but, as they honestly desired to avoid a conflict, they proposed as a fundamental or an organic act their voluntary submission to every parliamentary diminution of their liberty which time had sanctioned, including the navigation acts and taxes for regulating trade, on condition of being relieved from every part of the new system of administration, and being secured against future attempts for its introduction. Richard Penn, the agent of congress, was in London with its petition to the king, to entreat his concurrence in this endeavor to restore peace and union.

1775. Aug.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE KING AND THE SECOND PETITION OF CONGRESS.

AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, IN EUROPE; NOVEMBER IN AMERICA, 1775.

THE zeal of Richard Penn appeared from his celerity. Four days after the petition to the king had been adopted by congress, he sailed from Philadelphia on his mission. He arrived in Bristol on the thirteenth of August, and was the next day in London. Joint proprietary of the opulent and rapidly increasing colony of Pennsylvania, of which he for a time was governor, long a resident in America, intimately acquainted with many of its leading statesmen, the chosen suppliant from its united delegates, an Englishman of a loyalty above impeachment or suspicion, he singularly merited the confidence of the government. But not one of the ministers waited on him, or sent for him, or even asked him, through subordinates, one single question about the state of the colonies. He could not obtain an opportunity of submitting a copy of the petition to Lord Dartmouth till the twenty-first. The king, on whom neither the petition nor its bearer had the slightest influence, would not see him. "The king and his cabinet," said Suffolk, "are determined to listen to nothing from the illegal congress, to treat with the colonies only one by one, and in no event to recognise them in any form of association." 1775. Aug.

"The Americans," reasoned Sandwich, "will soon grow weary, and Great Britain will subject them by her arms." Haldimand, who had just arrived, owned that "nothing but force would bring them to reason." Resolvedly blind to consequences, George III. scorned to dissemble, and eagerly

"showed his determination," such were his words, "to force the deluded Americans into submission." He chid Lord North for "the delay in framing a proclamation declaring them rebels, and forbidding all intercourse with them." Happier than his minister, he had no misgivings that he could be in the wrong, or could want power to enforce his will. In his eyes, the colonists, who pleaded their rights against the unlimited supremacy of the king in parliament, were false to the crown and the constitution, to religion, loyalty, and the law; to crush their spirit and punish their disobedience was a duty and a merit. The navigation acts, of which it began to be seen that the total repeal would not diminish British trade, were not questioned; the view of a revenue from America had dissolved; the unwise change in the charter of Massachusetts weakened the influence of the crown by irritating the people; the most perfect success in reducing the American colonies to unconditional submission would have stained the glory of a nation whose great name was due to the freedom of its people, and would, moreover, have been dangerous, if not fatal, to its own liberties. Yet the word of the king would be irrevocable; for to whom else could the colonies look for mediation? Not to the landed aristocracy, which would not suffer the authority of parliament to be questioned; not to the electors, for they had just chosen a parliament, and thus exhausted their power; not to the city of Bristol, which bounded its political liberality by its commercial interests; not to the city of London, for with the unprincipled Wilkes as its lord mayor it could offer no support beyond a noisy remonstrance; not to the public opinion of England, for it never showed forbearance when her imperial supremacy was assailed.

The king made his decision without hesitation; and he wished the world to know that his will could not change. To render retreat impossible, on the twenty-third of August, two days after the delivery of a copy of the petition of congress, he sent out a proclamation for suppressing rebellion and sedition. It set forth that many of his subjects in the colonies had proceeded to open and avowed rebellion, by arraying themselves to

1775. Aug.

withstand the execution of the law, and traitorously levying war against him. "There is reason," so ran its words, "to apprehend that such rebellion hath been much promoted and encouraged by the traitorous correspondence, counsels, and comfort of divers wicked and desperate persons within our realm;" not only all the officers civil and military, but all subjects of the realm, were therefore called upon to disclose all traitorous conspiracies, and to transmit to one of the secretaries of state "full information of all persons who should be found carrying on correspondence with, or in any manner or degree aiding or abetting, the persons now in open arms and rebellion against the government within any of the colonies in North America, in order to bring to condign punishment the authors, perpetrators, and abettors of such traitorous designs."

The irrevocable publication having been made, Penn and Arthur Lee were "permitted" on the first of September to present the original of the American petition to Lord Dartmouth, who promised to deliver it to the king; but, on their pressing for an answer, "they were informed that, as it was not received on the throne, no answer would be given." Lee expressed sorrow at the refusal, which would occasion so much bloodshed; and the secretary answered: "If I thought the refusal would be the cause of shedding one drop of blood, I should never have concurred in it."

The proclamation, aimed at Chatham, Camden, Barré, and their friends, and at the boldest of the Rockingham party, even more than against the Americans, was read, but not with the customary ceremonies, at the royal exchange, where it was received with a general hiss. 1775. Aug.

Just after Penn's arrival, the ambassador of France wrote to Vergennes of the king and his ministers: "These people appear to me in a delirium; that there can be no conciliation we have now the certainty." "Rochford even assures me once more that it is determined to burn the town of Boston, and in the coming spring to transfer the seat of operations to New York. You may be sure the plan of these people is, by devastations, to force back America fifty years, if they cannot subdue it." Vergennes had already said:

"The cabinet of the king of England may wish to make North America a desert, but there all its power will be stranded; if ever the English troops quit the borders of the sea, it will be easy to prevent their return."

Vergennes could not persuade himself that the British government should refuse conciliation, when nothing was asked for but the revocation of acts posterior to 1763; and in his incredulity he demanded of the ambassador a revision of his opinion. "I persist," answered De Guines, "in thinking negotiations impossible. The parties differ on the form and on the substance as widely as white and black. An English ministry in a case like this can yield nothing, for according to the custom of the country it must follow out its plan or resign. The only sensible course would be to change the administration. The king of England is as obstinate and as feeble as Charles I., and every day
1775. Sept. he makes his task more difficult and more dangerous." Vergennes gave up his doubts, saying: "The king's proclamation against the Americans changes my views altogether; that proclamation cuts off the possibility of retreat; America or the ministers themselves must succumb."

In a few weeks, the proclamation reached the colo-
Nov. nies at several ports. Men said: "While America is still on her knees, the king aims a dagger at her heart." Abigail Smith, the wife of John Adams, was at the time in their home near the foot of Penn Hill, charged with the sole care of their little brood of children; managing their farm; keeping house with frugality, though opening her doors to the houseless and giving with good-will a part of her scant portion to the poor; seeking work for her own hands, and ever occupied, now at the spinning-wheel, now making amends for having never been sent to school by learning French, though with the aid of books alone. Since the departure of her husband for congress, the arrow of death had sped near her by day, and the pestilence that walks in darkness had entered her humble mansion; she herself was still weak after a violent illness; her house was a hospital in every part; and, such was the distress of the

neighborhood, she could hardly find a well person to assist in looking after the sick. Her youngest son had been rescued from the grave by her nursing; her own mother had been taken away, and, after the austere manner of her forefathers, buried without prayer. Woe followed woe, and one affliction trod on the heels of another. Winter was hurrying on; during the day family affairs took off her attention, but her long evenings, broken by the sound of the storm on the ocean or the enemy's artillery at Boston, were lonesome and melancholy. Ever in the silent night dwelling on the love and tenderness of her departed parent, she needed the consolation of her husband's presence; but when, in November, she read the king's proclamation, she willingly gave up her nearest friend to his perilous duties, and sent him her cheering message: "This intelligence will make a plain path for you, though a dangerous one; I could not join to-day in the petitions of our worthy pastor for a reconciliation between our no longer parent state, but tyrant state, and these colonies. Let us separate; they are unworthy to be our brethren. Let us renounce them; and, instead of supplications, as formerly, for their prosperity and happiness, let us beseech the Almighty to blast their counsels, and bring to nought all their devices."

Her voice was the voice of New England. Under the general powers of commander, Washington, who had hired vessels, manned them with sea-captains and sailors from his camp, and sent them to take vessels laden with soldiers or stores for the British army, now urged on congress the appointment of prize courts for the condemnation of prizes. The legislature of Massachusetts, without waiting for further authority, of themselves, in an act drawn by Elbridge Gerry, instituted such tribunals.

"The king's silly proclamation will put an end to petitioning," wrote James Warren, the speaker, to Samuel Adams; "movements worthy of your august body are expected: a declaration of independence, and treaties with foreign powers." 1775. Nov.

Hawley was the first to discern the coming national gov-

ernment of the republic, even while it still lay far below the horizon; and he wrote from Watertown to Samuel Adams: "The eyes of all the continent are fastened on your body, to see whether you act with firmness and intrepidity, with the spirit and despatch which our situation calls for; it is time for your body to fix on periodical annual elections, nay, to form into a parliament of two houses."

1775. Nov. The first day of November brought to the general congress the king's proclamation, and definite rumors that the colonies were threatened with more ships-of-war and British troops, and Russians, Hanoverians, and Hessians. The burning of Falmouth was also known. The majority saw that the last hope of conciliation was gone; and, while they waited for instructions from their several constituencies before declaring independence, they acted upon the petitions of the colonies that wished to institute governments of their own. On the second in committee, on the third in the house, it was resolved: "That it be recommended to the provincial convention of New Hampshire to call a full and free representation of the people, and that the representatives, if they think it necessary, establish such a form of government as, in their judgment, will best produce the happiness of the people, and most effectually secure peace and good order in the province, during the continuance of the present dispute between Great Britain and the colonies." On the fourth, the same advice was extended to South Carolina. Here was, indeed, the daybreak of revolution. It was already the conviction of the majority that the dispute between Great Britain and the colonies could end only in a separation; so that the men of New Hampshire and of South Carolina were virtually instructed to give the example of assuming power for all future time.

The revolution plainly portended danger to the proprietary government of Pennsylvania. The legislature of that colony was in session; it continued to require all its members to take and subscribe the old qualification appointed by law, which included the promise of allegiance to George III.; so that Franklin, though elected for Philadelphia through the Irish and the Presbyterians, would never take

his seat. Dickinson had been returned for the county by an almost unanimous vote; supported by patriots who still confided in his integrity, by loyalists who looked upon him as their last hope, by the Quakers who knew his regard for peace, by the proprietary party whose cause he had always vindicated. Now was the crisis of his fame. The assembly, on the fourth, elected nine delegates to the continental congress. Of these, one was too ill to serve; of the rest, Franklin stood alone as the unhesitating champion of independence; the majority remained to the last its opponents. It was known that, two days after the American agents had sent to the secretary of state a copy of the second petition of congress, the king had issued his proclamation against the American insurgents and their abettors, in language which plainly included Dickinson as well as every other member of congress among the "dangerous and designing men," rebels and traitors, whom the civil and military officers were ordered to "bring to justice;" but with the bad logic of wounded vanity he shut his mind against the meaning of the facts; and on the ninth he reported and carried these instructions to the Pennsylvania delegates: "We direct that you exert your utmost endeavors to agree upon and recommend such measures as you shall judge to afford the best prospect of obtaining redress of American grievances, and restoring that union and harmony between Great Britain and the colonies, so essential to the welfare and happiness of both countries. Though the oppressive measures of the British parliament and administration have compelled us to resist their violence by force of arms, yet we strictly enjoin you, that you, in behalf of this colony, dissent from and utterly reject any propositions, should such be made, that may cause or lead to a separation from our mother country, or a change of the form of this government." 1775. Nov.

The assembly, which adopted these instructions of adhesion to the proprietary government and dependence on the British king, sat always with closed doors, and would not allow the names of the voters on the division to be recorded in their journal. Delaware was naturally swayed

by the example of its more powerful neighbor; the party of the proprietary in Maryland took courage; in a few weeks, the assembly of New Jersey in like manner restrained its delegates in congress by an equally stringent declaration. Thus for five or six months the assembly of Pennsylvania blocked the way to effective measures. To prevent the spontaneous call of a convention of the people, it assumed a plausible appearance of patriotism, approved the military association of all who had no scruples about bearing arms, adopted rules for the volunteer battalions, and appropriated eighty thousand pounds in provincial paper money to defray the expenses of a military preparation. To counteract its pusillanimous policy, Franklin encouraged Thomas Paine, who was the master of a singularly lucid and attractive style, to write an appeal to the people of America in favor of independence.

1775. Nov.

Moreover, the assembly, in asserting the inviolability of the proprietary form of government, which had originally emanated from a king, placed itself in opposition to the principle of John Rutledge, John Adams, and the continental congress, that "the people are the source and original of all power." That principle had just been applied on the memorial of New Hampshire with no more than one dissenting vote. Yet the men of that day had been born and educated as subjects of a king. They were not yet enemies of monarchy; they had as yet turned away from considering whether well-organized civil institutions could be framed for wide territories without a king; and in the very moment of resistance they longed to escape the necessity of a revolution. Zubly, a delegate from Georgia, a Swiss by birth, declared in his place "a republic to be little better than a government of devils," shuddered at the idea of a separation from Great Britain as fraught with greater evils than had yet been suffered, and fled from congress to seek shelter under the authority of the crown; but the courage of John Adams, whose sagacity had so soon been vindicated by events, rose with the approach of danger; he dared to present to himself the problem of the system best suited to the colonies in the sudden emergency, and,

guided by nature and experience, he looked for the essential elements of government behind its forms. He studied the principles of the British constitution not merely in the history of England, but as purified and reproduced in the governments of New England, and as analyzed and reflected in the writings of Montesquieu. "A legislative, an executive, and a judicial power comprehended the whole of what he meant and understood by government;" and, as the only secret to be discovered was how to derive these powers directly from the people, he persuaded himself, and succeeded in persuading others, that, by the aid of a convention, "a single month was sufficient, without the least convulsion or even animosity, to accomplish a total revolution in the government of a colony." 1775. Nov.

The continental congress perceived the wisdom of a declaration of independence; but they acquiesced in the necessity of postponing it till there should be a better hope of unanimity. They became more resolute, more thorough, and more active; they recalled their absent members; they welcomed the trophies of victory sent by Montgomery from the northern army. In September, they had appointed a secret committee to import gunpowder, field-pieces, and arms; now, without as yet opening the commerce of the continent by a general act, they empowered that committee to export provisions or produce to the foreign West Indies at the risk of the continent, in order to purchase the materials of war. They did not issue letters of reprisal against British property on the high seas; but in November they adopted "rules for the government of the American navy," directed the enlistment of two battalions of marines, authorized the seizure of all ships employed as carriers for the British fleet or army, and sanctioned tribunals instituted in the separate colonies to confiscate their cargoes. The captures already made under the authority of Washington they confirmed. To meet the further expenses of the war, they voted bills of credit for three millions more.

A motion by Chase of Maryland to send envoys to France with conditional instructions did not prevail; but, on the twenty-ninth of November, Harrison, Franklin, Johnson,

Dickinson, and Jay were appointed a secret "committee for the sole purpose of corresponding with friends in Great Britain, Ireland, and other parts of the world;" and funds were set aside "for the payment of such agents as they might send on this service." "It is an immense misfortune to the whole empire," wrote Jefferson to a refugee, "to have a king of such a disposition at such a time. We are told, and every thing proves it true, that he is the bitterest enemy we have; his minister is able, and that satisfies me that ignorance or wickedness somewhere controls him. Our petitions told him that from our king there was but one appeal. The admonition was despised, and that appeal forced on us. After colonies have drawn the sword, there is but one step more they can take. That step is now pressed upon us by the measures adopted, as if they were afraid we would not take it. There is not in the British empire a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain than I do; but, by the God that made me, I will cease to exist before I yield to a connection on such terms as the British parliament propose; and in this I speak the sentiments of America." Yet Dickinson still soothed himself with the belief that the petition of his drafting had not been rejected, and that a conciliatory disposition would be manifested in the king's speech at the opening of parliament.

1775. Nov.

CHAPTER L.

HOW GEORGE III. FARED IN HIS BID FOR RUSSIANS.

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, 1775.

THE king's proclamation was a contemptuous defiance alike of the party of Rockingham and the party of Chatham, as the instigators, correspondents, and accomplices of the American rebels. Rochford was heard repeatedly to say that, before the winter should pass over, heads would fall on the block. "The king of England," said Wilkes, the lord mayor of London, in conversation at a public dinner, "hates me; I have always despised him: the time is come to decide which of us understands the other best and in what direction heads are to fall." Vergennes, who, with wonderful powers of penetration, analyzed the public men and their acts, but neither the institutions nor the people of England, complacently flattered Louis XVI. by contrasting its seeming anarchy with the happiness of the French in "living peacefully under a good and virtuous king." "I know," said George III., "what my duty to my country makes me undertake, and threats cannot prevent me from doing that to the utmost extent." He scoffed at the thought of an insurrection, though he stationed troops where riotous disorder was apprehended. A rumor prevailed that seven or eight members of the opposition would be sent to the Tower of London; but this happened only to Stephen Sayre, an American by birth, a man of no political importance. 1775. Sept.

Loyal addresses began to come in, to the joy of Lord North; but the king, whose instincts on the subject of despotic authority were more true than those of any man in his cabinet, wished to avoid the appeal to popular opinion.

For a time, the public was united by the representation that the insurrection in the colonies had been long premeditated with the design of achieving independence; and, while that delusion lasted, the violent measures of coercion were acquiesced in "by a majority of individuals of all ranks and professions;" yet without zeal, and unattended by a willingness to serve in America, so that the regiments could not be kept full by enlistments in Britain. The foreign relations of England became, therefore, of paramount importance.

The secretary of state desired to draw from the French ambassador at London a written denial of Lee's assertion that the Americans had a certainty of receiving support from France and Spain; but the intimation was evaded, for "the king of France would not suffer himself to be made an instrument to bend the resistance of the Americans." "If they should apply to us," said Vergennes, "we shall dismiss them politely, and we shall keep their secret."

Beaumarchais, who was then in England as an emissary from Louis XVI., and who from the charms of his conversation, his ability to write verses and to sing well, his generous style of living, and his apparent want of an official character, had opportunities of gaining information from the most various sources, encouraged the notion that England might seek to recover her colonies by entering on a war with France, and thus reviving their ancient sympathies. Having become acquainted with Arthur Lee, and having received accurate accounts of the state of America from persons newly arrived, he left London abruptly for Paris, and through De Sartine presented to the king a secret memorial in favor of taking part with the insurgents. "The Americans," said he, "are full of the enthusiasm of liberty, and resolve to suffer every thing rather than yield; such a people must be invincible; all men of sense are convinced that the English colonies are lost for the mother country, and I share their opinion."

1775. Sept. On the twenty-second of September, the day after the subject was discussed in the council of the king, De Sartine put a new commission into the hands of Beau-

marchais. Vergennes continued to present America to his mind in every possible aspect. He found it difficult to believe that the mistakes, absurdity, and passion of the British ministers could be so great as they really were; otherwise, he never erred in his judgment. He received hints of negotiations for Russian troops; yet he held it impossible that the king of England should be willing to send foreign mercenaries against his own subjects. Henry IV. would not have accepted the aid of foreign troops to reduce Paris; their employment would render it in any event impossible to restore affectionate relations between the parent state and the colonies. Vergennes had not penetrated the character of the British government of his day, 1775. Sept. which, in the management of domestic affairs, was tempered by a popular influence, but which, in its foreign policy, consulted only the interests or the pride of the oligarchy, and was less capable of a generous impulse than that of France. The ministry did not scruple to engage troops wherever they chanced to be in the market.

The hereditary prince of Hesse-Cassel, already the ruler of the little principality of Hanau, had scented the wants of England, and written to George III.: "I never cease to make the most ardent vows and prayers for the best of kings; I venture to offer, without the least condition, my regiment of five hundred men, all ready to sacrifice with me their life and their blood for your majesty's service. Deign to regard the motive, and not the thing itself. Oh that I could offer twenty thousand men to your majesty! it should be done with the same zeal; my regiment is all ready at the first twinkle that shall be given me;" and, like the beggar that sends his goods as a present to a rich patron from whose charity he means to extort more than the market price, he demanded nothing, but hurried to England to renew his solicitations.

The king wished leave to recruit in Holland, and to obtain of that republic the loan of its so-called Scottish brigade, which consisted no longer of Scots, but chiefly of Walloons and deserters. The house of Orange would have consented; but the dignity, the principles, and the policy of

the states-general, forbade. This is the first attempt of either party to interest the Netherlands in the American war; and its neutrality gave grievous offence in England.

Sir Joseph Yorke, at the Hague, was further directed to gain information on "the practicability of using the good dispositions of the king's friends upon the continent, and the military force which its princes might be engaged to supply." For England to recruit in Germany was a defiance of the law of the empire; but Yorke reported that recruits might be raised there in any number, and at a tolerably easy rate; and that bodies of troops might be obtained of the princes of Hesse-Cassel, Würtemberg, Saxe-Gotha, Darmstadt, and Baden.

1775. Sept. But for the moment England had in contemplation a larger scheme. Gunning's private and confidential despatch from Moscow was received in London on the first day of September, with elation. That very day Suffolk prepared an answer to the minister. To Catharine, George himself with his own hand wrote: "I accept the succor that your majesty offers me of a part of your troops, whom the acts of rebellion of my subjects in some of my colonies in America unhappily require; I shall provide my minister with the necessary full powers; nothing shall ever efface from my memory the offer your imperial majesty has made to me on this occasion." Armed with this letter, Gunning was ordered to ask of the empress twenty thousand disciplined infantry, completely equipped, and prepared, on the opening of the Baltic in spring, to embark by way of England for Canada, where they were to be under the supreme command of the British general. The journey from London to Moscow required about twenty-three days; yet they were all so overweeningly confident that they hoped to get the definitive promise by the twenty-third of October, in season to announce it at the opening of parliament; and early in September Lord Dartmouth and his secretary hurried off messages to Howe and to Carleton, that the empress had given the most ample assurances of letting them have any number of infantry that might be wanted.

On the eighth, Suffolk despatched a second courier to

Gunning, with a project of a treaty for taking a body of Russian troops into the pay and service of Great Britain. The treaty was to continue for two years, within which the king and his ministers were confident of crushing the insurrection. The levy money for the troops might be seven pounds sterling a man, payable one half in advance, the other half on embarkation. A subsidy was not to be refused. "I will not conceal from you," wrote Suffolk to Gunning, "that, this accession of force being very earnestly desired, expense is not so much an object as in ordinary cases."

On the tenth, Gunning poured out to the empress assurances of the most inviolable attachment on the part of England. "Has any progress been made," asked the empress with the utmost coolness, "towards settling your dispute in America?" and, without waiting for an answer, she added: "For God's sake, put an end to it as soon as possible, and do not confine yourselves to one method of accomplishing this desirable end; there are other means of doing it than force of arms, and they ought all to be tried. You know my situation has lately been full as embarrassing, and, believe me, I did not rest my certainty of success upon one mode of acting. There are moments when we must not be too rigorous. The interest I take in every thing that concerns you makes me speak thus freely upon this subject." 1775. Sept.

"The measures which are pursuing to suppress the rebellion," answered Gunning, who found himself most unexpectedly put upon the defensive, "are such as are consistent with his majesty's dignity and that of the nation, and I am persuaded that your majesty would neither advise nor approve of any that were not so; resentment has not yet found its way into his majesty's councils." But Catharine only repeated her wishes for a speedy and a peaceful end to the difference; thus reading the king of England a lesson in humanity, and citing her own example of lenity and concession as the best mode of suppressing a rebellion.

Late on the twenty-fourth, the first British courier reached Moscow a few hours after Catharine's departure for some

days of religious seclusion in the monastery at Voskresensk; for she was scrupulous in her observance of the forms and usages of the Greek church. As no time was to be lost, Gunning went to Panin, who received him cordially, heard him without any sign of emotion, and consented to forward to the empress in her retirement a copy of the king's letter. He next repaired to the vice-chancellor, Ostermann. It was the policy of the empire to preserve amicable relations with George III.; the vice-chancellor, therefore, calmly explained the impossibility of conceding the request for troops; but the British envoy persisted in his urgency, and, misinterpreting the self-possession and friendly manner of the Russian minister, deluded himself into the belief that the British requisition, if it should come to be a matter of debate, would be supported by his voice.

The empress having, on the thirtieth, returned to Moscow, Gunning waited on Panin by appointment. The autograph letter, which he wished to deliver to her in person, said positively that she had made him an offer of troops; Panin denied that any such offer had been made, and, after much expostulation, Gunning confessed: "It is true; in your answer to me, no explicit mention was made of troops." Panin then gave the message of the empress, that she was affected by the cordiality of the king, that in return her friendship was equally warm, but that she had much repugnance to having her troops employed in America. "And could not his majesty," asked Panin, "make use of Hanoverians?"

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Gunning replied at great length: "Will the refusal of troops be a suitable return for our conduct during the late war, for our having foregone the commercial advantages which the Porte would undoubtedly have granted us, could she only have obtained a real neutrality on our part, which our partiality for Russia prevented us from observing? Were not the king's harbors, his subjects, and the credit and influence of the nation at her service during the whole war? Did not his majesty, at the risk of a rupture with France and Spain, forbid those powers to molest the Russian fleet, which they would otherwise have annihilated? And though

these services were rendered from the most pure and disinterested motives, yet, as it has pleased the empress so frequently to express her wishes for an occasion of showing her sense of their merit, it is with the utmost astonishment I see her decline the present occasion of evincing it. I conjure you, by regard for the honor of your sovereign, to reflect on the light in which such a refusal must be looked upon by us, as well as by all the powers in Europe, and on the effect it may have on the conduct of some of them." And, as he was refused an audience, he desired Panin himself to deliver the autograph letter of George III.

The next morning, Gunning went to Panin before he was up, and, to remove objections, offered to be content with a corps of fifteen thousand men. At court, though it was the grand duke's birthday, he found that the empress would not appear. He returned to the palace in the evening; but the empress, feigning indisposition, excused herself from seeing him. 1775. Oct.

Meantime, the proposal was debated in council; and objections without end rose up against the traffic in troops, from the condition of the army wasted by wars, the divisions in Poland, the hostile attitude of Sweden, the dignity of the empress, the danger of disturbing her relations with other powers, the grievous discontents it would engender among her own subjects. She asked Panin whether granting such assistance would not disgust the British nation; and Ivan Ctzernichew, lately her ambassador at London, now minister of the marine, declared that it would do so, for the great body of the people of England were vehemently opposed to the policy of their king and his ministers.

Besides, what motive had the people of Russia to interfere against the armed husbandmen of New England? Catharine claimed to sit on the throne of the Byzantine Cæsars, as heir to their dignity and their religion; and how could she so far disregard her own glory as to make a shambles of the mighty empire which assumed to be the successor of Constantine's? The first suggestion to Catharine that the king of England needed her aid was flattering to her vanity;

and, supposing it had reference only to entanglements in Europe, she was pleased with the idea of becoming the supreme arbiter of his affairs. But a naked demand of twenty thousand men to serve in America, under British command as mercenaries, with no liberty left to herself but to fix the price of her subjects in money and so plunge her hand as deeply as she pleased into the British exchequer, was an offence to her pride and an insult to her honor. She framed accordingly a sarcastic and unequivocal answer: "I am just beginning to enjoy peace, and your majesty knows that my empire has need of repose. It is also known what must be the condition of an army, though victorious, when it comes out of a long war in a murderous climate. There is an impropriety in employing so considerable a body in another hemisphere, under a power almost unknown to it, and almost removed from all correspondence with its sovereign. My own confidence in my peace, which has cost me so great efforts, demands absolutely that I do not deprive myself so soon of so considerable a part of my forces. Affairs on the side of Sweden are but put to sleep, and those of Poland are not yet definitively terminated. Moreover, I should not be able to prevent myself from reflecting on the consequences which would result for our own dignity, for that of the two monarchies and the two nations, from this junction of our forces, simply to calm a rebellion which is not supported by any foreign power."

The letter of the king of England to the empress was in his own hand; she purposely employed her private secretary to write her answer. The second English courier, with the project of a treaty, reached Gunning on the fourth of October; he seized the earliest opportunity to begin reading it to Panin, and came down in his demand to ten thousand men; but the chancellor, interrupting him, put into his hands Catharine's answer, and declined all further discussion.

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The letter seemed to the British envoy in some passages exceptionable, and he was in doubt whether it was fit to be received; but he suppressed his discontent. His king found fault with the manner of the empress as not "genteel;"

for, said he, "she has not had the civility to answer me in her own hand; and has thrown out expressions that may be civil to a Russian ear, but certainly not to more civilized ones."

The conduct of this negotiation was watched by every court from Moscow to Madrid; but no foreign influence whatever, not even that of the king of Prussia, had any share in determining the empress. The decision was founded on her own judgment and that of her ministers. A transient report prevailed, that the English request was to be granted; but Vergennes rejected it as incredible, and wrote to the French envoy at Moscow: "I cannot reconcile Catharine's elevation of soul with the dishonorable idea of trafficking in the blood of her subjects." On the last day of October, the French minister asked Panin of the truth of the rumor, and Panin answered: "People have said so, but it is physically impossible; nor is it consistent with the dignity of England to employ foreign troops against its own subjects." 1775. Oct.

The empress continued to be profuse of courtesies to Gunning; and, when in December he took his leave, she renewed the assurances of affection and esteem for his king, whom she expressed her readiness to assist on all occasions, adding, however: "But one cannot go beyond one's means."

CHAPTER LI.

PARLIAMENT IS AT ONE WITH THE KING.

OCTOBER—DECEMBER, 1775.

"WHEN the Russians arrive, will you go and see their camp?" wrote Edward Gibbon to a friend. "We
1775. Oct. have great hopes of getting a body of these barbarians; the ministers daily and hourly expect to hear that the business is concluded; the worst of it is, the Baltic will soon be frozen up, and it must be late next year before they can get to America." The couriers that, one after another, arrived from Moscow, dispelled this confidence. The king bore the disappointment with his wonted firmness; and turned for relief to the smaller princes of Germany, who now, on the failure of his great speculation, had the British exchequer at their mercy.

The plan of the coming campaign was made in the expectation of finishing the war in season to disband the extraordinary forces within two years. For the Russians, who were to have protected the city and province of Quebec, Germans were to be substituted, whatever might be the cost. The advantage of keeping possession of Boston, as a means of occupying the attention of New England, was considered; but it was determined to concentrate the British forces at New York, as the best means of securing the central provinces and the connection with Canada. A small force of some hundred men was held sufficient, with the aid of loyalists and negroes, to recover Virginia. The promises of Martin led to the belief that, on the appearance of a few regiments, the Highland emigrants and many thousands in the back counties of North Carolina would rally round the royal standard; and, in consequence,

five regiments of infantry, with ten thousand stand of arms, six small field-pieces, two hundred rounds of powder and ball for each musket and field-piece, were ordered to be in readiness to sail from Cork early in December; and this force was soon after made equal to seven regiments. "I am not apprised where they are going," thus Barrington expostulated with Dartmouth; "but, if there should be an idea of such a force marching up the country, I hope it will not be entertained. Allow me once more to remind you of the necessity there is in all military matters not to stir a step without full consultation of able military men, after giving them the most perfect knowledge of the whole matter under consideration, with all its circumstances." The warning had no influence, for the king would not consult those who were likely to disagree with him. A naval force, equal to the requirements of the governor of South Carolina for the recovery of that province, was prepared.

"I am fighting the battle of the legislature," said the king; "I therefore have a right to expect an almost unanimous support; I know the uprightness of my intentions, and am ready to stand any attack of ever so dangerous a kind." The good sense of the English people reasoned very differently, and found an organ among the ministers themselves. The Duke of Grafton, by letter, entreated Lord North to go great lengths to bring about a durable reconciliation, giving as his reasons that "the general inclination of men of property in England differed from the declarations of the congress in America little more than in words; that many hearty friends to government had altered their opinions by the events of the year; that their confidence in a strong party among the colonists, ready to second a regular military force, was at an end; that, if the British regular force should be doubled, the Americans, whose behavior already had far surpassed every one's expectation, could and would increase theirs accordingly; that the contest was not only hopeless, but fraught with disgrace; that the attendant expenses would lay upon the country a burden which nothing could justify but an insult from a foreign enemy; that, therefore, the colonies should be invited

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by their deputies to state to parliament their wishes and expectations, and a truce be proclaimed, until the issue should be known." Of this communication Lord North took no note whatever until within six days of the opening of parliament, and then replied by enclosing a copy of the intended speech.

Hastening to court, Grafton complained of the violent and impracticable schemes of the ministers, framed in a misconception of the resources of the colonies; and he added: "Deluded themselves, they are deluding your majesty." The king debated with him the business at large; but, when he announced that a numerous body of German troops was to join the British forces, Grafton answered earnestly: "Your majesty will find too late that twice the number will only increase the disgrace, and never effect the purpose."

1775. Oct. On the twenty-sixth of October, two days after the refusal of the empress of Russia was known, the king met the parliament. Of the many who were to weigh his words spoken on that occasion, the opinion of those not present was of the most importance. Making no allusion whatever to the congress or to its petition, he charged the people in America with being in a state of openly avowed revolt, levying a rebellious war for the purpose of establishing an independent empire; he professed to have received the most friendly offers of foreign assistance; and he announced that he had garrisoned Gibraltar and Port Mahon with his electoral troops, in order to employ the former garrisons in America. To make a speedy end of the disorders by most decisive exertions, he recommended an increase of the navy and the army; at the same time, he proposed to send over commissioners with power to grant pardons and receive the submission of the several colonies. Thus the speech, which in its words and its effects was irrevocable, presented a false issue. The Americans had not designed to establish an independent government; their leading statesmen were most anxious to avert a separation, if they could but preserve their inherited liberties.

The house of commons took the king at his word; Ac-

land, who moved the address, reduced the question into a very short compass: "Does Britain choose to acquiesce in the independence of America, or to enforce her submission?" Lyttelton, whom we have seen as governor of South Carolina, in seconding the address, "seemed to take pleasure in informing the house that the negroes in the southern colony were numerous, and ready to imbrue their hands in the blood of their masters. He was against conciliatory offers; the honor of the nation required coercive measures; the colonies ought to be conquered before mercy should be shown them." The house sustained these sentiments by a vote of two hundred and seventy-eight against one hundred and ten. 1775. Oct.

On the report of the address, the debate was renewed. "If we suffer by the war," said Lord North, "the Americans will suffer much more. Yet," he added, "I wish to God, if it were possible, to put the colonies as they were in 1763." His seeming disinclination to the measures of his own ministry drew on him a rebuke from Fox for not resigning his place. "The present war," argued Adair at length, "took its rise from the assertion of a right, at best but doubtful in itself; a right, from whence the warmest advocates for it have long been forced to admit that this country can never derive a single shilling of advantage. The Americans, it is said, will be satisfied with nothing less than absolute independence. They do not say so themselves; their language is: 'Restore the ancient constitution of the empire, under which all parts of it have flourished; place us in the situation of the year sixty-three, and we will submit to your regulations of commerce, and return to our obedience and constitutional subjection.' Our ministers tell us they will not in truth be content with what they themselves have professed to demand. Have you tried them? Make the experiment. Take them at their word. If they should recede from their own proposals, you may then have recourse to war, with the advantage of a united instead of a divided people at home." Sir Gilbert Elliot, who spoke well and skilfully, was unwilling "to send a large armament to America, without sending at the same time terms of

accommodation." "I vote for the address," said Rigby, "because it sanctifies coercive measures. America must be conquered, and the present rebellion must be crushed, ere the dispute will be ended." The commons unhesitatingly confirmed their vote of the previous night.

1775. Oct.

Among the lords, Shelburne spoke of the petition of the congress as the fairest ground for an honorable and advantageous accommodation; and of Franklin as one whom "he had long and intimately known, and had ever found constant and earnest in the wish for conciliation upon the terms of ancient connection." His words were a prophecy of peace, and of himself and Franklin as its mediators; but on that night he was overborne by a majority of two to one. Some of the minority entered their protest, in which they said: "We conceive the calling in foreign forces to decide domestic quarrels to be a measure both disgraceful and dangerous."

That same day, the university of Oxford, the favored printer of the translated Bible for all whose mother tongue was the English, the natural guardian of the principles and the example of Wycliffe and Latimer and Ridley and Cranmer, the tutor of the youth of England, addressed the king against the Americans as "a people who had forfeited their lives and fortunes to the justice of the state."

On the last day of October, Lord Stormont, the British ambassador in Paris, was received at court. The king of France, whose sympathies were all on the side of monarchical power, said to him: "Happily the opposition party is now very weak." From the king, Stormont went to Vergennes, who expressed the desire to live in perfect harmony with England; "far from wishing to increase your embarrassments," said he, "we see them with some uneasiness." "The consequences," observed Stormont, "cannot escape a man of your penetration and extensive views." "Indeed they are very obvious," responded Vergennes; "they are as obvious as the consequences of the cession of Canada. I was at Constantinople when the last peace was made; when I heard its conditions, I told several of my friends there

that England would ere long have reason to repent of having removed the only check that could keep her colonies in awe. My prediction has been but too well verified. I equally see the consequences that must follow the independence of North America, if your colonies should carry that point, at which they now so visibly aim. They might, when they pleased, conquer both your islands and ours. I am persuaded that they would not stop there, but would in process of time advance to the southern continent of America, and either subdue its inhabitants or carry them along with them, and in the end not leave a foot of that hemisphere in the possession of any European power. All these consequences will not indeed be immediate: neither you nor I shall live to see them; but for being remote they are not less sure."

On the first of November, the Duke of Manchester said to the lords: "The violence of the times has wrested America from the British crown, and spurned the jewel because the setting appeared uncouth;" but the debate which he opened had no effect except that Grafton took part with him, and as a consequence resigned his place as keeper of the privy seal. Every effort of the opposition was futile. On the tenth, Richard Penn was called to the bar of the house of lords, where he bore witness in great detail to the sincerity of the American congress in their wish for conciliation, and to the unanimity of support which they received from the people. Under the most favorable auspices, the Duke of Richmond proposed to accept the petition from that congress to the king as a ground for conciliation; he was ably supported by Shelburne; but his motion, like every similar motion in either house, was negatived by a majority of about two to one. 1775. Nov.

On the same day, the definitive ministerial changes, which were to give a character to the whole war, were completed. Rochford retired on a pension, making way for Lord Weymouth, who greatly surpassed him in ability and resolution. Dartmouth left the cabinet, and took the privy seal. The American department was transferred from him to Lord George Sackville Germain, who owed his selection to his concentrating in himself all the political patronage of the

house of Dorset, and his promise to carry out the measures recommended by him in his speech in the house of commons on the twenty-eighth of March, 1774. The man thus selected to conduct the civil war in America stood before Europe as an officer cashiered for cowardice on the field of battle. George II., who was a brave and strict disciplinarian, thought the sentence just, and was inexorable towards him. His admission to court at the accession of George III. confirmed the rupture between Pitt and the Earl of Bute. In 1761, the king promised to take off the proscription against him at the end of the war; but, when peace came, he saw so many objections to giving him an office, that he would only consent to receive him at court with civility. On hearing this message, Lord George sank from all his hopes, and looked on himself as blasted for ever. He owed his rehabilitation to Rockingham, to whom he instantly proved false; Chatham would never sit with him at the council board. Haunted by corroding recollections and stupidly self-confident, he entered on his high office, for which he was of all men the least competent, eager to efface his ignominy by rivalling the energetic career of Pitt in the seven years' war. But his powers were very much overrated; he had not any one quality that fitted him for an important military office: so that his appointment was of the very best augury for the success of the insurgent Americans. Minutely precise and formal, he had a feverish activity, punctuality to a minute, and personal application, but no sagacity, nor quick perception, nor soundness of judgment, nor that mastery over others which comes from force of character and warmth of heart. He could not plan a campaign, and was a most uncomfortable chief, always proposing to the general officers under his direction measures which they had not the means to execute, and always throwing upon them the fault of failure even in impossible schemes. His rancor towards those at whom he took offence was bitter and unending. His temper was petulant; his passions were violent and constant, yet petty in their objects. Apparelled on Sunday morning in gala, as if for the drawing-room, he constantly marched out

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all his household to his parish church, where he would mark time for the singing gallery, chide a rustic chorister for a discord, stand up during the sermon to survey the congregation or overawe the idle, and with unmoved sincerity gesticulate approbation to the preacher, or cheer him by name. He was rich; but in a period of corrupt government he was distinguished for the inordinate gratification of his own cupidity in the exercise of his powers of patronage and confiscation. Though smooth and kindly to his inferiors and dependants, he was capable of ordering the most atrocious acts of cruelty; could rebuke his generals for checking savages in their fury as destroyers; and at night, on coming home to his supper and his claret, the friendless man, unloving and unloved, could, with cold, vengeful malice, plan how to lay America in ashes, since he knew not how to gain the glory of reducing her to submission.

Germain's appointment shows how little the sympathies of the English people were considered; the administration, as it was now constituted, was the weakest, the least principled, and the most unpopular of that century. The England that the world revered, the England that kept alive in Europe the vestal fire of freedom, was at this time outside of the government, though steadily gaining political strength. "Chatham, while he had life in him, was its nerve." Had Grenville been living, it would have included Grenville; it retained Rockingham, Grenville's successor; it had now recovered Grafton, Chatham's successor; and Lord North, who succeeded Grafton, sided with Germain and Sandwich only by spasms, and, though he loved his place, was more against his own ministry than for it. The king's policy was not in harmony with the England of the revolution, nor with that of the eighteenth century, nor with that of the nineteenth. The England of to-day, which receives and brightens and passes along the torch of liberty, has an honest lineage, and springs from the England of the last century; but it had no representative in the ministry of Lord North or the majority of the fourteenth parliament. America would right herself within a year; Britain and Ireland must wait more than a half century.

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How completely the ministry were stumbling along without a policy, appeared from the debates. On the
1775. Nov. 8. eighth, Lord Barrington asked of the house in a committee of supply an appropriation for twenty-five thousand men to be employed in America, and said, with the authority of a minister: "The idea of taxing America is entirely given up; the only consideration is how to secure the constitutional dependency of that country. The general plan adopted by administration is first to arm, and then send out commissioners."

This explicit renunciation of American taxes startled the landed gentry, for whom a reduction of a shilling in the pound of the land-tax was to have been the first-fruits of their support of the American measures. When
Nov. 13. Lord North, on the thirteenth, in a committee of supply moved the full tax of four shillings in the pound on land, he had to encounter and overcome the rankling discontent of those who remembered the remarks of Barrington, and he spoke in this wise: "When his majesty's ministers said that the idea of taxation was abandoned, they never intended by that expression more than that it is abandoned for the present; that taxation is but a matter of secondary consideration, when the supremacy and legislative authority of this country are at stake. Taxation is not, nor ever was out of their view. It should be insisted on and enforced, to insure your legislative authority, though no kind of advantage should arise from it." The explanation gave satisfaction; Lord North retained the support of the landholders, by a sacrifice of his opinions, and with them of America.

Nov. 16. On the sixteenth, Burke brought forward a bill for composing the existing troubles by renouncing the pretension to an American revenue. "If we are to have no peace," replied Germain, "unless we give up the right of taxation, the contest is brought to its fair issue. I trust we shall draw a revenue from America; the spirit of this country will go along with me in the idea to crush rebellious resistance."

As he said this, the orders were already on the way to

hire troops of the roytelets of Brunswick and Hesse-Cassel, and, in defiance of the laws of the empire, to raise four thousand recruits in Germany; for, if Germain was to crush the Americans, it could not be done by Englishmen. The ministry was the master of parliament, but not of the affections of the English people.

Still less did the ministry possess the hearts of the people of Ireland; though it controlled a majority of her legislature, and sought to allay discontent by concessions in favor of her commerce and manufactures. The consent of the Irish house of commons was requested to sending four thousand of the troops on the Irish establishment to America, and receiving in their stead four thousand German Protestants. "If we give our consent," objected Ponsonby, in the debate on the twenty-fifth of November, "we shall take part against America, contrary to justice, to prudence, and to humanity." "The war is unjust," said Fitzgibbon, "and Ireland has no reason to be a party therein." Sir Edward Newenham could not agree to send more troops to butcher men who were fighting for their liberty; and he reprobated the introduction of foreign mercenaries as equally militating against true reason and sound policy. "If men must be sent to America," cried George Ogle, "send their foreign mercenaries, not the brave sons of Ireland." Hussey Burgh condemned the American war as "a violation of the law of nations, the law of the land, the law of humanity, the law of nature; he would not vote a single sword without an address recommending conciliatory measures; the ministry, if victorious, would only establish a right to the harvest when they had burnt the grain." Yet the troops were voted by one hundred and twenty-one against seventy-six, although the resolution to replace them by foreign Protestants was negatived by sixty-eight against one hundred and six.

The majority in parliament did not quiet Lord North. Sir George Saville describes him "as one day for conciliation; but, as soon as the first word is out, he is checked and controlled, and instead of conciliation out comes confusion." On the first of December, he pressed 1775. Dec.

to a second reading the American bill, which consolidated the several penal acts and enlarged them into a prohibition of the trade of all the thirteen colonies. American vessels and goods were made the property of their captors; the prisoners might be compelled to serve the king even against their own countrymen. No one American grievance was removed; but commissioners were to be appointed to accept the submission of the colonies, or parts of colonies, one by one, with power to grant pardons to individuals or to a whole community in the lump. The atrocity of the measure was exposed in the house of commons, but without effect; on the third reading, in the house of lords, Mansfield explained his own views, which in their essen-
1775. Dec. tial features were those of the king: "The people of America are as much bound to obey the acts of the British parliament as the inhabitants of London and Middlesex. I have not a doubt in my mind that ever since the peace of Paris the northern colonies have been meditating a state of independence on this country. But allowing that all their professions are genuine, that every measure hitherto taken to compel submission to the parliamentary authority of this country was cruel and unjust, yet what, my lords, are we to do? Are we to rest inactive with our arms across, till they shall think proper to begin the attack, and gain strength to do it with effect? We are now in such a situation that we must either fight or be pursued. As a Swedish general said to his men of their enemy: 'If you do not kill them, they will kill you;' if we do not, my lords, get the better of America, America will get the better of us. Are we to stand idle, because we are told this is an unjust war? I do not consider who was originally in the wrong; we are now only to consider where we are. The justice of the cause must give way to our present situation; and the consequences which must ensue, should we recede, would, nay, must, be infinitely worse than any we have to dread by pursuing the present plan or agreeing to a final separation." After these words, the bill was adopted without a division.

From the beginning of the troubles, George III. had

regarded the renunciation of the colonies as preferable to a connection on American principles; for such a connection would have endangered his system of government at home. To him it was an option between losing the brightest jewel in his crown, and losing the monarchical power of which the crown was the emblem. On the other hand, Fox and Rockingham defended American liberty as the bulwark of the rights of the British people. If a cordial reconciliation should not be speedily effected, to lose America entirely seemed to them a less evil than to hold her as a conquered country; for the maintaining of that dominion by an army only would inevitably terminate in the downfall of the constitution.

Outside of parliament, the most intelligent among the philosophers of North Britain yielded to the ministerial measures a reluctant acquiescence or discountenanced them by open rebuke. The lukewarm Presbyterian, William Robertson, whose smooth style in his more elaborate pages is like satin without a crease, and whose discreet method in history palliated or veiled the enormities of the Spaniards, forgot how well he had written at the time when the men in power were repealing the stamp act. "If the wisdom of government could now terminate the contest with honor instantly," he thought, "that would be the most desirable issue;" but yet he would have the British "leaders at once exert the power of the British empire in its full force," and station a "few regiments in each capital." He was certain that the Americans had been aiming all along at independence; and, like the Bedford party in parliament, he held it fortunate that matters had so soon been brought to a crisis. As a lover of mankind, he was ready to bewail the check to prosperous and growing states; but, said he, "we are past the hour of lenitives and half exertions." 1775.

On the other hand, John Millar, the professor of law in the university of Glasgow, taught the youth of Scotland who frequented his lectures "that the republican form of government is by far the best, either for a very small or a very extensive country."

"I cannot but agree with him," said David Hume, who yet maintained that it would be "most criminal" to disjoint the established government in Great Britain, where he believed a republic would so certainly be the immediate forerunner of despotism that none but fools would think to augment liberty by shaking off monarchy. He had written the History of England without love for the country, or comprehension of its early popular liberty, or any deep insight into its parties, or exact study of its constitution. He that reads his lucid and attractive pages will not learn from them the formation of the "native English" tongue, or of the system of English government, or of religious opinion, or of English philosophy, or of English literature; his work is the work of a skeptic, polemic against the dogmatism of the church, otherwise unbiassed except by the skeptic's natural predilection for the monarchical principle. But he had no faith in the universal application of that principle. "The ancient republics," said he, rising above the influence of his philosophy, "were somewhat ferocious and torn by bloody factions; but they were still much preferable to the ancient monarchies or aristocracies, which seem to have been quite intolerable. Modern manners have corrected this abuse; and all the republics in Europe, without exception, are so well governed that one is at a loss to
1775. which we should give the preference." "I am an American in my principles, and wish we would let them alone to govern or misgovern themselves, as they think proper; the affair is of no consequence, or of little consequence, to us."

But one greater than Robertson and wiser than Hume gave the best expression to the mind of Scotland. Adam Smith, the peer and the teacher of statesmen, enrolled among the benefactors of our race, one who had closely studied the economy of France as well as of Britain, and who in his style combined the grace and the clearness of a man of the world with profound wisdom and the sincere search for truth, applied to the crisis those principles of freedom and right which made Scotland, under every disadvantage of an oppressive form of feudalism and a

deceitful system of representation, an efficient instrument in promoting the liberties of mankind. He would have the American colonies either fairly represented in parliament or independent. The prohibitory laws of England towards the colonies he pronounced "a manifest violation of the most sacred rights," "impertinent badges of slavery imposed upon them without any sufficient reason by the groundless jealousy of the merchants and manufacturers of the mother country." "Great Britain," said he, "derives nothing but loss from the dominion she assumes over her colonies." "It is not very probable that they will ever voluntarily submit to us; the blood which must be shed in forcing them to do so is every drop of it the blood of those who are or of those whom we wish to have for our fellow-citizens." "They are very weak who flatter themselves that, in the state to which things are come, our colonies will be easily conquered by force alone." And he pointed out the vast immediate and continuing advantages which Great Britain would derive, if she "should voluntarily give up all authority over her colonies, and leave them to elect their own magistrates, to enact their own laws, and to make peace and war as they might think proper."

Josiah Tucker, an English royalist writer on political economy, had studied perseveringly the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, in their application to commerce; and, at the risk of being rated a visionary enthusiast, he now sought to convince the landed gentry that Great Britain would lose nothing if she should renounce her colonies and cultivate commerce with them as an independent nation. This he enforced with such strength of argument and perspicuity of statement that Soame Jenyns wrote verses in his praise, and Mansfield approved his treatise. 1775.

Thus rose through the clouds of conflict and passion the cheering idea that the impending change, which had been deprecated as the ruin of the empire, would bring no disaster to Britain. American statesmen had struggled to avoid a separation; the king was the author of American independence. His several measures, as one by one they



were successively borne across the Atlantic: its cons
for the petition of progress he sought to sustain
his avowed negotiations for mercenaries, the s
of the ports of all the thirteen colonies and s
sing all their property in the seas — based upon
the conviction that they must govern them
selves.

CHAPTER LII.

THE CAPTURE OF MONTREAL.

AUGUST—NOVEMBER, 1775.

WHEN Carleton heard of the surrender of Ticonderoga to Allen and Arnold, he resolved to attempt its recovery. The continental congress had, on the first of June, disclaimed the purpose of invading Canada; and a French version of their resolution was distributed among its inhabitants. But on the ninth of that month the governor of the province proclaimed the American borderers to be a rebellious band of traitors, established martial law, and summoned the French peasantry to serve under the old colonial nobility, while the converted Indian tribes and the savages of the north-west were instigated to take up the hatchet against New York and New England. These movements affected the intentions of congress, and made the occupation of Canada an act of self-defence. 1775.

The French nobility, of whom many under the Quebec act were received into the council or appointed to executive offices, and the Catholic clergy who had recovered their estates and their tithes, acquiesced in the new form of government; but by a large part of the British residents it was detested, as subjection to arbitrary power. The instincts of the Canadian peasantry inclined them to take part with the united colonies: they denied the authority of the French nobility as magistrates, and resisted their claim of a right as seigniors to command their military services. Without the hardihood to rise of themselves, they were willing to welcome an invasion.

Carleton appealed to the Catholic bishop. That prelate, who was a stipendiary of the British king, sent a mandate

to the several parishes, to be read by the clergy after divine service, but the peasantry persisted in refusing to turn out.

The first object of Schuyler, on taking the immediate command of the northern army, was to learn the state of Canada; and in Major John Brown he found a trusty emissary. He next endeavored to introduce order into his camp. On the twenty-seventh of July, the regiment of Green Mountain Boys elected its officers; and, instead of Ethan Allen, Seth Warner, a man of equal courage and better judgment, was elected its lieutenant-colonel.

1775. Aug. Under the direction of Schuyler, boats were rapidly built at Ticonderoga; and his humanity brooked no delay in adopting measures for the relief of the sick; but, as twelve hundred men formed the whole force that he could as yet lead beyond the border, he feared that the naval strength of the enemy might prevent his getting down the Sorel River; and on the sixth of August he wrote to congress, which had already adjourned, for information whether he was to proceed. The reference implied his own conviction, that his army was inadequate to the enterprise. Before the middle of the month, Brown returned from his perilous march of observation, and reported that now was the time to carry Canada, where there were only about seven hundred regulars, of whom three hundred were at St. John's; that the inhabitants were friends; that the militia refused to serve under the French officers lately appointed. At the same time, a new arrival at Ticonderoga changed the spirit of the camp.

We have seen Richard Montgomery, who had served in the army from the age of fifteen, gain distinction in the seven years' war. Several years after his return to Ireland, he took the steps which he believed sufficient for his promotion to a majority; failing in his pursuit and thinking himself overreached, he sold his commission in disgust, and emigrated to New York. Here, in 1773, he renewed his former acquaintance with the family of Robert R. Livingston, and married his eldest daughter. Never intending to draw his sword again, studious in his habits, he wished for retirement; and his wife, whose affections he entirely pos-

sessed, willingly conformed to his tastes. At Rhinebeck a mill was built, a farm stocked, and the foundation of a new house laid, so that peaceful years seemed to await them. Montgomery was of a sanguine temperament, yet experience had tinged his spirit with melancholy, and he would often say: "My happiness is not lasting; but yet let us enjoy it as long as we may, and leave the rest to God." And they did enjoy life; blest with parents, brothers, sisters, and friends, their circle was always enlivened by intelligent conversation and the undisturbed flow of affection. The father of his wife used to say that, "if American liberty should not be maintained, he would carry his family to Switzerland, as the only free country in the world." War was the dream of her grandfather alone, the aged Robert Livingston, the stanchest and most sagacious patriot of them all. In 1773, in his eighty-fourth year, he foretold the conflict with England; and, when his son and grandchildren smiled at his credulity, "You, Robert," said he to his grandson, "will live to see this country independent." At the news of the retreat of the British from Concord, the octogenarian's eye kindled with the fire of youth, and he confidently announced American independence. Soon after the battle of Bunker Hill, he lay calmly on his death-bed, and his last words were: "What news from Boston?"

From such a family circle, the county of Duchess, in April, 1775, selected Montgomery as a delegate to the first provincial convention in New York, where he distinguished himself by unaffected modesty, promptness of decision, and soundness of judgment. On receiving his appointment as brigadier-general, he reluctantly bade adieu to his "quiet scheme of life;" "perhaps," he said, "for ever, but the will of an oppressed people, compelled to choose between liberty and slavery, must be obeyed."

On the sixth of August, from Albany, he advised that Tryon, whose secret designs he had penetrated, should be conducted out of the way of mischief to Hartford. He reasoned justly on the expediency of taking possession of Canada, as the means of guarding against Indian hostilities, and displaying to the world the strength of the

1775. Aug.

confederated colonies; it was enlarging the sphere of operations, but a failure would not impair the means of keeping the command of Lake Champlain. Summoned by Schuyler to Ticonderoga, he was attended as far as Saratoga by his wife, whose fears he soothed by cheerfulness and good humor, and his last words to her at parting were: "You will never have cause to blush for your Montgomery."

On the seventeenth of August, his arrival at Ticonderoga was the signal for Schuyler to depart for Saratoga, promising to return on the twentieth. That day came, and other days followed, and still Schuyler remained away. On the twenty-fifth, Montgomery wrote to him entreatingly to join the army with all expedition, as the way to give the men confidence in his spirit and activity. On the evening of the twenty-sixth, an express was received from Washington, who urged the acquisition of Canada and explained the plan for an auxiliary enterprise by way of the Kennebec. "I am sure," wrote the chief, "you will not let any difficulties, not insuperable, damp your ardor; perseverance and spirit have done wonders in all ages. You will therefore, by the return of this messenger, inform me of your ultimate resolution; not a moment's time is to be lost." In obedience to this letter, Schuyler left the negotiation with Indians to the other commissioners at Albany, and set off for his army.

Montgomery, wherever he came, looked to see what could be done, and to devise the means of doing it; he had informed Schuyler that he should probably reach St. John's on the first day of September. Schuyler sent back no reply. "Moving without your orders," rejoined Montgomery, "I do not like; but the prevention of the enemy is of the utmost consequence; for, if he gets his vessels into the lake, it is over with us for the present summer;" and he went forward with a thousand or twelve hundred men. Retarded by violent head-winds and rain, it was the third of September when he arrived at Isle La Motte. On the fourth, he was joined by Schuyler, and they proceeded to Isle-aux-Noix. The next day, a declaration of friendship was dispersed amongst the inhabitants. On the sixth, Schuyler, with forces not exceeding a thousand, em-

1775. Sept.

barked for St. John's. They landed without obstruction, a mile and a half from the fortress, towards which they marched in good order over marshy and wooded ground. In crossing a creek, the left of their advanced line was attacked by a party of Indians; but, being promptly supported by Montgomery, it beat off the assailants, yet with a loss of nine subalterns and privates. Schuyler's health had declined as he approached the army. In the night, a person came to his tent with false information, which he laid before a council of war; their opinion being in accord with his own, he immediately ordered a retreat, and, without carefully reconnoitring the fortress, he led back the troops unmolested to the Isle-aux-Noix. From that station he wrote to congress: "I have not enjoyed a moment's health since I left Fort George, and am now so low as not to be able to hold the pen. Should we not be able to do any thing decisively in Canada, I shall judge it best to move from this place, which is a very wet and unhealthy part of the country, unless I receive your orders to the contrary."

This letter was the occasion of "a large controversy" in congress; his proposal to abandon Isle-aux-Noix was severely disapproved; it was resolved to spare neither men nor money for his army, and, if the Canadians would remain neuter, no doubt was entertained of the acquisition of Canada. He himself was encouraged to attend to his own health, and this advice implied a consent that the command of the invading forces should rest with Montgomery.

Meantime, Schuyler, though confined to his bed, sent out on the tenth a party of five hundred; they returned on the eleventh, disgraced by "unbecoming behavior." Upon this, Montgomery, having discerned in the men a rising spirit more consonant with his own, entreated permission to retrieve the late disasters; and Schuyler, who was put into a covered boat for Ticonderoga, turned his back on the scene with regret, but not with envy, and relinquished to the gallant Irishman the conduct, the danger, and the glory of the campaign. 1775. Sept.

The day after Schuyler left Isle-aux-Noix, Montgomery began the investment of St. John's. The Indians kept at

peace; and the zealous efforts of the governor, the clergy, and the French nobility had hardly added a hundred men to the garrison. Carleton thought himself abandoned by all the earth, and wrote to the commander in chief at Boston: "I had hopes of holding out for this year, had the savages remained firm; but now we are on the eve of being overrun and subdued."

On the morning after Montgomery's arrival near St. John's, he marched five hundred men to its north side. A party which sallied from the fort was beaten off, and the detachment was stationed at the divergence of the roads to Chambly and Montreal. Additions to his force and supplies of food were continually arriving through the indefatigable attention of Schuyler; and, though the siege flagged for the want of powder, the investment was soon made so close that the retreat of the garrison was impossible.

1775. Sept.

The want of subordination delayed success. Ethan Allen had been sent to Chambly to raise a corps of Canadians. They gathered round him with spirit, and his officers advised him to lead them without delay to the army; but, dazzled by vanity and rash ambition, he attempted to surprise Montreal. Dressed, as was his custom when on a recruiting tour, in "a short fawn skin, double breasted jacket, a vest and breeches of woollen serge, and a red worsted cap," he passed over from Longueil to Long Point, in the night preceding the twenty-fifth of September, with about eighty Canadians and thirty Americans, though he had so few canoes that but a third of his party could embark at once. On the next day, he discovered that Brown, whom he had hoped to find with two hundred men on the south side of the town, had not crossed the river. Retreat from the island was impossible; about two hours after sunrise, he was attacked by a motley party of regulars, English residents of Montreal, Canadians, and Indians, in all about five hundred men, and, after a defence of an hour and three quarters, he, with thirty-eight men, was obliged to surrender; the rest fled to the woods. At the barrack yard in Montreal, Prescott, a British brigadier, asked the

prisoner: "Are you that Allen who took Ticonderoga?" "I am the very man," quoth Allen. Then Prescott, in a great rage, called him a rebel and other hard names, and raised his cane. At this, Allen shook his fist, telling him: "This is the beetle of mortality for you, if you offer to strike." "You shall grace a halter at Tyburn," cried Prescott, with an oath.

The wounded, seven in number, entered the hospital; the rest were shackled together in pairs, and distributed among different transports in the river. But Allen, as the chief offender, was chained with leg irons weighing about thirty pounds; their heavy, substantial bar was eight feet long; the shackles, which encompassed his ankles, were so very tight and close that he could not lie down except on his back; and in this plight, thrust into the lowest part of a vessel, the captor of Ticonderoga was dragged to England, where imprisonment in Pendennis Castle did not abate his courage or his hope.

1775. Oct. The issue of this rash adventure daunted the Canadians for a moment, but difficulties only brought out the resources of Montgomery. He was obliged to act entirely from his own mind; for there was no one about him competent to give advice. Of the field officers, he esteemed Brown alone for his ability; though Macpherson, his aide-de-camp, a very young man, universally beloved, of good sense and rare endowments, gave promise of high capacity for war. But his chief difficulties grew out of the badness of the troops. Schuyler also complained of the Connecticut soldiers, announcing even to congress: "If Job had been a general in my situation, his memory had not been so famous for patience." "The New Englanders," wrote Montgomery, "are the worst stuff imaginable for soldiers. They are homesick; their regiments are melted away, and yet not a man dead of any distemper. There is such an equality among them that the officers have no authority, and there are very few among them in whose spirit I have confidence; the privates are all generals, but not soldiers, and so jealous that it is impossible, though a man risk his person, to escape the imputation of treachery."

Of the first regiment of Yorkers, he gave a far worse account; adding: "The master of Hindostan could not recompense me for this summer's work; I have envied every wounded man who has had so good an apology for retiring from a scene where no credit can be obtained. O fortunate husbandmen, would I were at my plough again!" Yet, amidst all his vexations, his reputation steadily rose throughout the country; and he so won the affection of his army that every sick soldier, officer, or deserter, that passed home, agreed in praising him wherever they stopped.

1775. Oct.

The wearisomeness of delay, occasioned by the want of munitions of war, increased the anxiety of Montgomery. There was no hope of his reducing the garrison from their want of provisions. The ground on which he was encamped was very wet, the weather cold and rainy, so that the troops suffered exceedingly from sickness. Insubordination heightened his distress. Seeing that the battery was ill placed, he would have erected one at the distance of four hundred yards from the north side of the fort; but the judgment of the army was against him. "I did not consider," said he, "I was at the head of troops who carried the spirit of freedom into the field and think for themselves;" and, saving appearances by consulting a council of war, he acquiesced in their reversing his opinion. In John Lamb, the captain of a New York company of artillery, he found "a restless genius, brave, active, and intelligent, but very turbulent and troublesome."

Anxious to relieve St. John's, Carleton, after the capture of Allen, succeeded in assembling about nine hundred Canadians at Montreal; but a want of mutual confidence, and the certainty that the inhabitants generally favored the Americans, dispirited them, and they disappeared by desertions, thirty or forty of a night, till he was left almost as forlorn as before. The Indians, too, he found of little service; "they were easily dejected, and chose to be of the strongest side, so that when they were most wanted they vanished." But history must preserve the fact that, though often urged to let them loose on the rebel provinces,

in his detestation of cruelty he would not suffer a savage to pass the frontier.

In this state of mutual weakness, the inhabitants of the parishes of Chambly turned the scale. Ranging themselves under James Livingston of New York, then a resident in Canada, and assisted by Major Brown, with a small detachment from Montgomery, they sat down before the fort in Chambly, which, on the eighteenth of October, after a siege of a day and a half, was ingloriously surrendered by the English commandant. The colors of the seventh regiment, which were here taken, were transmitted as the first trophy to congress; the prisoners, one hundred and sixty-eight in number, were marched to Connecticut; but the great gain to the Americans was seventeen cannon and six tons of powder.

The siege of St. John's now proceeded with efficiency. The army of Montgomery yielded more readily to his guidance; Wooster, of Connecticut, had arrived, and set an example of cheerful obedience to his orders. At the north-west, a battery was constructed on an eminence within two hundred and fifty yards of the fort; and by the thirtieth it was in full action.

To raise the siege, Carleton planned a junction with Maclean; but Montgomery sent Easton, Brown, and Livingston to watch Maclean, who was near the mouth of the Sorel, while Warner was stationed near Longueil. Having by desperate exertions brought together about eight hundred Indians, Canadians, and regulars, Carleton on the last day of October embarked them at Montreal, in thirty-four boats, to cross the St. Lawrence. But, as they drew near the bank, Warner, with three hundred Green Mountain Boys and men of the second New York regiment, poured on them so destructive a fire that they retired with loss and in disorder.

At the news of Carleton's defeat, Maclean, deserted by the Canadians and losing all hope of support, retired to Quebec; while the besiegers pushed on their work with unceasing diligence, keeping up a well-directed fire by day and night. On the third of November, after a 1775. Nov.

siege of fifty days, the fort of St. John's surrendered; and its garrison, consisting of five hundred regulars and one hundred Canadians, many of whom were of the French gentry, marched out with the honors of war.

Montgomery hastened to Montreal as rapidly as the bad weather and worse roads would permit; and on the twelfth, unopposed, he took possession of the town. He came to give the Canadians the opportunity of establishing their freedom and reforming their laws; and he requested them to choose as soon as possible "faithful representatives to sit in the continental congress, and make a part of that union." He sought to impress them with the idea that the freedom of the thirteen colonies could never be securely enjoyed, so long as arbitrary government should remain established in Canada; that no reconciliation could take place till the liberties of all should be secured on the same basis. He earnestly urged Schuyler to pass the winter at Montreal. In the midst of his unparalleled success, the hero longed to be below the Catskills, with his young wife, his farm occupations, and his books. "I have courted Fortune," he wrote to his brother-in-law, "and found her kind. I have one more favor to solicit, and then I have done." Men, money, and artillery were wanting; in the face of a Canadian winter, he nevertheless resolved to attempt the capture of Quebec.

1775. Nov.

CHAPTER LIII.

THE MARCH TO QUEBEC.

SEPTEMBER—NOVEMBER, 1775.

THE detachment which Washington sent to the St. Lawrence consisted of ten companies of New England infantry, one of riflemen from Virginia, and two from Pennsylvania: in all, two battalions of about eleven hundred men. The command was given to Arnold, who, as a trader in years past, had visited Quebec, where he still had correspondents. In person he was short of stature and of a florid complexion; his broad, compact frame displayed a strong animal nature and power of endurance; he was complaisant and persuasive in his manners, desperately brave and sanguinely hopeful, avaricious and profuse, of restless activity, "intelligent and enterprising." 1775. Sept.

The next in rank as lieutenant-colonels were Roger Enos, who proved to be a craven, and the brave Christopher Greene of Rhode Island. The majors were Return J. Meigs of Connecticut, and Timothy Bigelow, the early patriot of Worcester, Massachusetts. Morgan, with Humphreys and Heth, led the Virginia riflemen; Hendricks, a Pennsylvania company; Thayer commanded one from Rhode Island, and like Arnold, Meigs, Dearborn, Henry, Senter, Melvin, left a journal of the expedition. Aaron Burr, then but nineteen years old, and his friend Matthias Ogden, carrying muskets and knapsacks, joined as volunteers. Samuel Spring attended as chaplain.

The humane instructions given to Arnold enjoined respect for the rights of property and the freedom of opinion, and aimed at conciliating the affectionate co-operation of the Canadians. "If Lord Chatham's son," so wrote Washing-

ton, "should fall into your power, you cannot pay too much honor to the son of so illustrious a character, and so true a friend to America." Chatham, from his fixed opinion of the war, desired to withdraw his son from the service; and Carleton, anticipating that decision, had already sent him home as bearer of despatches.

To the Canadians, Washington's words were: "The cause of America and of liberty is the cause of every virtuous American citizen, whatever may be his religion or his descent. Come then, range yourselves under the standard of general liberty."

Boats and provisions having been collected, the detachment, on the evening of the nineteenth of September, sailed from Newburyport, and the next morning entered the Kennebec. Passing above the bay where that river is met by the Androscoggin, they halted at Fort Western, which consisted of two block houses, and one large house, enclosed with pickets, hard by the east bank of the river, on the site of Augusta. An advance party of seven men marked the shortest carrying-place from the Kennebec to the Dead River, by snagging the bushes and blazing the trees. The detachment followed in four divisions, in as many successive days. Each division took provisions for forty-five days. On the twenty-fifth, Morgan and the riflemen were sent first to clear the path; Greene and Bigelow followed with three companies of musketeers; Meigs with four companies went next; Enos with three companies closed the rear.

They ascended the river slowly to Fort Halifax, opposite Waterville; daily to their waists in water, hauling their boats against a very rapid current. On the fourth of October, they passed the vestiges of an Indian chapel, a fort, and the grave of the missionary Rasles. After they took leave of settlements and houses at Norridgewock, their course lay up the swift Kennebec, which flowed through the thick forest of an almost trackless wild; now rowing, now dragging their boats, now bearing them on their shoulders round rapids and cataracts, across morasses, over craggy highlands. On the tenth, the party reached the dividing ridge between the Kennebec and Dead

1775. Oct.

River. Their road stretched through forests of pines, balsam fir, cedar, cypress, hemlock, and yellow birch, and over three ponds, that lay hid among the trees and were full of trout. After passing them, they had no choice but to carry their boats, baggage, stores, and ammunition across a swamp, which was overgrown with bushes and white moss, often sinking knee deep in the wet turf and bogs. From Dead River, Arnold on the thirteenth wrote to the commander of the northern army, announcing his plan of co-operation. Of his friends in Quebec he inquired what ships were there, what number of troops, and what was the disposition of the Canadians and merchants; and he forwarded his letter by an Indian.

Following the Dead River eighty-three miles, encountering upon it seventeen portages, and near its source a series of small ponds choked with fallen trees, in ten or twelve days more the main body arrived at the great carrying-place to the Chaudière. On the way, they heard the disheartening news that Enos had deserted the enterprise, leading back three companies to Cambridge. 1775. Oct.

The mountains had been clad in snow since September; winter was howling around them, and their course was still to the north. On the night preceding the twenty-eighth of October, some of the party encamped on the height of land that divides the waters of the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic. As they advanced, their sufferings increased. Some went barefoot for days together. Their path was shagged with thorns; their clothes had become so torn, they were almost naked; at night they had no couch or cover but branches of evergreens. Often for successive days and nights they were exposed to drenching storms, and had to cross torrents that were swelling with the rain. Their provisions failed, so that they even eat the dogs that followed them. Many a man, vainly struggling to march on, stiffened with cold and death. Here and there a helpless invalid was left behind, with perhaps a soldier to hunt for a red squirrel, a jay, or a hawk, or gather roots and plants for his food, and watch his expiring breath. On Dead River, Macleland, the lieutenant of Hendricks's company, was suffering from in-

flamed lungs; his friends tenderly carried him on a litter across the mountain, Hendricks himself in his turn putting his shoulder to the burden.

The men had hauled up their barges nearly all the way for one hundred and eighty miles, had carried them nearly forty miles, through hideous woods and mountains, often to their knees in mire, over swamps and bogs almost impenetrable, which they were obliged to cross three or four times to fetch their baggage; and yet starving, deserted, with an enemy's country and uncertainty ahead, officers and men, inspired with the love of liberty and their country, pushed on with invincible fortitude.

Too eager to descend the rocky channel of the Chaudière, the adventurers had three of their boats overset in the whirls of the stream; losing ammunition and precious stores, which they had brought along with so much toil.

1775. Nov. The first day of November was bright and warm. "I passed a number of soldiers who had no provisions, and some that were sick, and had no power to help them," writes one of the party. On the second of that month, French Canadians came up with two horses, driving before them five oxen, at which the party fired a salute for joy, and laughed with frantic delight. On the fourth, about an hour before noon, they descried a house at Sertigan, twenty-five leagues from Quebec, near the fork of the Chaudière and the Du Loup. It was the first they had seen for thirty-one days; and never could the view of cultivated fields or flourishing cities awaken such ecstasy of gladness as this rude hovel on the edge of the wilderness. They did not forget their disabled fellow-soldiers: Macleland was brought down to the comfortable shelter, though he breathed his farewell to the world the day after his arrival.

The party followed the winding river to the parish of St. Mary, straggling through a flat and rich country, which had for its ornament low, bright, whitewashed houses, the comfortable abodes of a cheerful and hospitable people. Here and there along the road chapels met their eyes, and images of the Virgin Mary, and rude imitations of the Saviour's sorrows.

By the labor of seven weeks, Cramahé, the lieutenant-governor, had put the walls of Quebec into a good posture for defence. The communications, intrusted by Arnold to friendly Indians, had been, in part at least, intercepted. On the eighth of November his approach was known, but not the amount of his force. On the tenth Arnold arrived at Point Levi, but all boats had been carefully removed from that side of the St. Lawrence. He waited until the thirteenth for the rear to come up, and employed the time in making ladders and collecting canoes, while Quebec was rapidly gaining strength for resistance. A vessel from Newfoundland had brought a hundred carpenters. Colonel Allan Maclean arrived on the twelfth with a hundred and seventy men, levied chiefly among disbanded Highlanders who had settled in Canada. The "Lizard" and the "Hunter," ships-of-war, were in the harbor; and the masters of merchant ships with their men were detained for the defence of the town. At nine in the evening of the thirteenth, Arnold began his embarkation in canoes, which were but thirty in number, and carried less than two hundred at a time; by crossing the river three times, before daybreak on the morning of the fourteenth all of his party, except about one hundred and fifty left at Point Levi, were landed undiscovered, yet without their ladders, at Wolfe's Cove. They met no resistance as they climbed the oblique path to the Plains of Abraham. Wolfe had come, commanding the river with a fleet; they, in frail bark canoes, hardly capable of holding a fourth of their number at a time: Wolfe, with a well-appointed army of thousands; they, with less than six hundred effective men, or a total of about seven hundred, and those in rags, barefooted, and worn down: Wolfe, with artillery; they, with muskets only, of which one hundred were unfit for service: Wolfe, with unlimited stores of ammunition; they, with spoiled cartridges and only a little damaged powder. 1775. Nov.

If it had required weeks for Montgomery with cannon and two thousand men to reduce St. John's, how could Quebec, a large and opulent town of five thousand inhabitants, strongly fortified and carefully guarded, be taken in a

moment by five hundred half-armed musketeers? "The enemy being apprised of our coming," Arnold "found it impracticable to attack them without too great risk." In the course of the day, he led two or three hundred men within sight of the walls, where they gave three huzzas of defiance; and in the evening he sent a flag to demand the surrender of the place. The British would not receive the flag, and would not come out. For two or three days Arnold encamped about a mile and a half from town, posting on its avenues small guards, which prevented fuel or refreshments of any kind being brought in. Yet the invaders had no chance of success, except their friends within the walls should rise; but of this there were no signs.

1775. Nov. Arnold then ordered a strict examination to be made into the state of his ammunition; and, as the result showed no more than five rounds to each man, on the nineteenth he withdrew his party to Point aux Trembles, eight leagues above Quebec, where they awaited the orders of Montgomery.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE SIEGE OF QUEBEC.

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, 1775.

THE day before Montgomery entered Montreal, Carleton, with more than a hundred regulars and Canadians, embarked on board some small vessels in the port to descend to Quebec. He was detained in the river for several days by contrary winds, and moreover he found the St. Lawrence, near the mouth of the Sorel, guarded by continental troops under Easton. On the seventeenth of November, Prescott, the cowardly brigadier who had so lately treated Allen with insolent cruelty, surrendered the flotilla of eleven sail with all the soldiers, sailors, and stores on board, from fear, without a blow given or received; but, in the darkest hour of the previous night, Carleton, entering a small boat in the disguise of a peasant, had been safely paddled through the islands that lie opposite the Sorel. Touching as a fugitive at Trois Rivières, he arrived on the nineteenth at Quebec, where his presence diffused joy and confidence among the loyal. Thus far he had shown great poverty of resources as a military chief; but his humane disposition, his caution, his pride, and his firmness were guarantees that the place would be pertinaciously defended. Besides, he had been Wolfe's quartermaster-general, and had himself witnessed how much of the success of his chief had been due to the rashness of Montcalm in risking a battle outside of the walls. 1775. Nov.

The progress of Montgomery had emboldened a party in Quebec to confess a willingness to receive him on terms of capitulation. But, on the twenty-second, Carleton ordered all persons who would not join in the defence of the town

to leave it within four days; and after their departure he found himself supported by more than three hundred regulars, three hundred and thirty Anglo-Canadian militia, five hundred and forty-three French Canadians, four hundred and eighty-five seamen and marines, beside a hundred and twenty artificers capable of bearing arms.

The troops with which Montgomery had conquered were of different colonies, had separate regulations and terms of enlistment, and retained the inquisitiveness and self-direction of civil life; so that his authority depended chiefly on his personal influence and his powers of persuasion. Now that Montreal was taken and winter was come, homesickness so prevailed that he was left with no more than eight hundred men to garrison his conquests, and to go down against Quebec. Even most of the Green Mountain Boys deserted him.

On the twenty-sixth, leaving St. John's under the command of Marinus Willett of New York, intrusting the government of Montreal to Wooster of Connecticut, and in the spirit of a lawgiver who was to regenerate the province making a declaration that on his return he would call a convention of the Canadian people, Montgomery, with artillery and provisions, embarked three hundred men,
1775. Dec. and on the third of December made a junction with Arnold. "The famine-proof veterans," now but six hundred and seventy-five in number, were paraded, to hear their praises from the lips of the hero, who, in animating words, did justice to their courage and superior style of discipline. From the public stores which he had taken, they received clothing suited to the terrible climate; and about noon on the fifth the army, composed of less than a thousand American troops and a volunteer regiment of about two hundred Canadians, appeared before Quebec, which had a garrison of twice their number, more than two hundred cannon of heavy metal, and provisions for eight months. There could therefore be no hope of its capture but by storm, and, as the engagements of the New England men ended with the thirty-first of December, the assault must be made within twenty-six days. He

grieved for the loss of life that might ensue, but his decision was prompt and unchanging. The works of the lower town were the weakest; these he thought it possible to carry, and then the favor of the inhabitants in the upper town, their concern for their property, the unwarlike character of the garrison, the small military ability of Carleton, offered chances of success.

The first act of Montgomery was a demand for the surrender of the city; but his flag of truce was not admitted. On the sixth, he addressed an extravagant and menacing letter to Carleton, which was sent by a woman of the country, and of which a copy was afterwards shot into the town upon an arrow; but Carleton would hold no communication with him, and every effort at correspondence with the citizens failed. 1775. Dec.

Four or five mortars were placed in St. Roc's, but the small shells which they threw did no essential injury to the garrison. A battery was begun about seven hundred yards south-west of St. John's gate; as the ground was frozen, the gabions and the interstices of the fascines were filled with snow; and on this water was poured, which froze instantly in the intense cold. On the fifteenth, the day after the work was finished, a flag of truce was again sent towards the wall, but the governor still refused to "hold any kind of parley with rebels." Montgomery knew that Carleton was sincere, and would sooner be buried under heaps of ruins than come to terms. The battery, consisting of but six twelve-pounders and two howitzers, had been thrown up only to lull the enemy into security at other points; its embankment was pierced through and through, and its guns destroyed, by the heavy artillery of the fortress. Some lives were lost, but the invaders suffered more from diseases of the lungs; and the small-pox began its ravages.

Carleton could not be provoked into making a sally. "To the storming we must come at last," said Montgomery. On the evening of the sixteenth, at a council of the commissioned officers of Arnold's detachment, a large majority voted for making an assault as soon as the men could be provided with bayonets, hatchets, and hand grenades. "In

case of success," promised Montgomery, "the effects of those who have been most active against the united colonies must fall to the soldiery." Days of preparation ensued, during which he revolved his desperate situation. His rapid conquests had filled the world with his praise; the colonies held nothing impossible to his good conduct and fortune; he had received the order of congress to hold Quebec, if it should come into his hands; should that
1775. Dec. fortress be taken, the Canadians would enter heartily into the union and send their deputies to congress. "Fortune," said he, "favors the brave; and no fatal consequences are likely to attend a failure."

One day, the general, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Macpherson, the pure-minded, youthful enthusiast for liberty, went out to meditate on "the spot where Wolfe had fallen, fighting for England in friendship with America." He ran a parallel in his mind between the career of Wolfe and his own; he had lost the ambition which once sweetened a military life, and a sense of duty was now his only spring of action; if the Americans should continue to prosper, he wished to return to the retired life in which he alone found delight; but, said he, "should the scene change, I shall be always ready to contribute to the public safety." And his last message to his brother-in-law was: "Adieu, my dear Robert; may your happy talents ever be directed to the good of mankind."

As the time for the assault drew near, three captains in Arnold's battalion, whose term of service was soon to expire, showed mutinous disaffection. In the evening of the twenty-third, Montgomery repaired to their quarters, and in few words gave them leave to stand aside; "he would compel none; he wanted with him no persons who went with reluctance." His words recalled the officers to their duty, but the incident hurried him into a resolution to attempt gaining Quebec before the first of January, when his legal authority to restrain the waywardness of the discontented would cease. At sundown of Christmas he reviewed Arnold's battalion at Morgan's quarters, and addressed them with spirit; after which, a council of war agreed upon a night

attack on the lower town. Their intention was revealed by a deserter to the garrison, so that every preparation was made against a surprise; two thirds of the men lay on their arms; in the upper town, Carleton and others not on duty slept in their clothes; in the lower, volunteer pickets kept watch; and they all wished ardently that the adventurous attempt might not be delayed.

The night of the twenty-sixth was clear, but so cold that no man could handle his arms or scale a wall. The evening of the twenty-seventh was hazy, and the troops were put in motion; but, as the sky soon cleared up, the general, who was tender of their lives, called them back, choosing to wait for the shelter of clouds and darkness. 1775. Dec.

For the next days the air was serene, and a mild westerly wind brightened the sky. On the thirtieth, a snow-storm from the north-east set in. But a few hours more of the old year remained, and with it the engagement of many of his troops would expire. Orders were therefore given for the troops to be ready at two o'clock of the following morning; and, that they might recognise one another, each soldier wore in his cap a piece of white paper, on which some of them wrote: "LIBERTY OR DEATH."

It was Montgomery's plan to alarm the garrison at once, along the whole line of their defences. Colonel James Livingston, with less than two hundred Canadians, was to attract attention by appearing before St. John's gate, on the south-west; while a company of Americans under Brown were to feign a movement on Cape Diamond, where the wall faces south by west, and from that high ground, at the proper time, were to fire rockets, as the signal for beginning the real attacks on the lower town, under Arnold from the west and north, under Montgomery from the south and east. If successful, both would meet in Mountain Street, near Prescot gate.

The general, who reserved for his own party less than three hundred Yorkers, led them in Indian file from head-quarters at Holland House to Wolfe's Cove, and then about two miles further along the shore. In several places they were obliged to scramble up slant rocks covered with two

feet of snow, and then, with a precipice on their right, to slide down fifteen or twenty feet. The wind, which was at east by north, blew furiously in their faces, with cutting hail, which the eye could not endure; their constant step wore the frozen snow into little lumps of ice, so that the men were fatigued by struggles not to fall, and could not keep their arms dry.

1775. Dec.

The signal from Cape Diamond being given more than half an hour too soon, the general with his aides-de-camp, Macpherson and Burr, pushed on with the front, composed of Cheesman's company and Mott's; and more than half an hour before day they arrived at the first barrier, with the guides and carpenters. The rest of the party lagged behind; and the ladders were not within half a mile. Montgomery and Cheesman were the first that entered the undefended barrier, passing on between the rock and the pickets which the carpenters began to saw and wrench away. While a message was sent back to hurry up the troops, Montgomery went forward to observe the path before him. It was a very narrow defile, falling away to the river precipitously on the one side, and shut in by the scarped rock and overhanging cliff on the other, so that not more than five or six persons could walk abreast; a house built of logs and extending on the south nearly to the river, with loopholes for musketry and a battery of two three-pounders, intercepted the passage. It was held by a party consisting of thirty Canadians and eight British militia men under John Coffin, with nine seamen under Barnsfare, the master of a transport, as cannoneers. The general listened, and heard no sound; but lights from lanterns on the Plains of Abraham, as well as the signal rockets, had given the alarm; and in the morning twilight, through the storm, his troops were seen in full march from Wolfe's Cove. At their approach to the barrier, "a part of the guard was scared with a panic;" but Coffin, who during the siege "had never missed an hour's duty," restored order, and the sailors stood at their guns with lighted linstocks.

Montgomery waited till about sixty men had joined him inside of the row of pickets; then exclaiming, "Men of

New York, you will not fear to follow where your general leads; push on, brave boys! Quebec is ours!" he pressed forward at double quick time to carry the battery. As he appeared on a little rising in the ground, at a distance of fifty yards or less from the mouths of the cannon, which were loaded with grape-shot, Barnsfare discharged them with deadly aim. Aaron Burr, who showed personal bravery and good conduct, escaped unhurt. Montgomery, his aid Macpherson, the young and gallant Cheesman, and ten others, fell dead; Montgomery from three wounds. With him the soul of the expedition fled. Mott was eager to go forward; but some of the men complained that their arms were wet; one or more of the officers thought nothing further could be attempted with wearied troops and no arm but the bayonet; fireballs were thrown by the enemy to light up the scene; their musketeers began to fire from the loopholes of the block-house; and Donald Campbell, who assumed the command of the Yorkers, encountered the reproach of ordering an immediate retreat, which was effected without further loss. 1775. Dec.

On the north-western side of the lower town, Arnold led twice as many troops as followed Montgomery. The path along the St. Charles had been narrowed by masses of ice thrown up from the river; and the battery by which it was commanded might have raked every inch of it with grape-shot, while their flank was exposed to musketry from the walls. As they reached Palace gate, the bells of the city were rung, the drums beat a general alarm, and the cannon began to play. The Americans ran along in single file, holding down their heads on account of the storm, and covering their guns with their coats. Lamb and his company of artillery followed with a field-piece on a sled; the field-piece was soon abandoned, but he and his men took part in the assault.

The first barricade was at the Sault au Matelot, a jutting rock which left little space between the river beach and the precipice. Near this spot, Arnold was severely wounded in the leg by a musket-ball, and carried off disabled; but Morgan's men, who formed the van, rushed forward to the

portholes and fired into them, while others, Charles Porterfield the second, Morgan himself the first, mounted by ladders, carried the battery, and took its captain and guard prisoners. But Morgan was at first followed only by his own company and a few Pennsylvanians. It was still very dark; he had no guide; and he knew nothing of the defences of the town. The faces of the men were hoar with frost and icicles, their muskets useless in the storm. The glow of attack began to subside, and the danger of their position to appear. They were soon joined by Greene, Bigelow, and Meigs, so that there were at least two hundred Americans in the town, who all pressed on in the narrow way to the second barricade, at the eastern extremity of Sault au Matelot Street, where the defences extended from the rock to the river. Under the direction of Greene, heroic efforts were made to carry them. With a voice louder than the north-east gale, Morgan cheered on his riflemen; but, though Heath and Porterfield and a few others in the front files ascended the scaling-ladders, it was only to see on the other side rows of troops prepared to receive them on hedges of bayonets, if they had leaped down. Here was the greatest loss of life; the assailants were exposed in the narrow street to a heavy fire from houses on both sides; some of the officers received several balls in their clothes; others fell. A retreat was thought of; but the moment for it soon went by. Some few escaped over the shoal ice on the St. Charles. Near daylight, about two hundred of the Americans took shelter in houses of stone, from which they could fire. It was then that Hendricks, while aiming his rifle, was shot through the heart. But the retreat of Campbell, and the certainty that the other attacks were only feints, left Carleton free to concentrate all his force against the party of Arnold. By his orders a sally was now made from Palace gate in their rear by Captain Laws with two hundred men; Dearborn's company was found divided into two parties, each of which successively surrendered, leaving "the flower of the rebel army" "cooped up" within the town. Morgan proposed that they should cut their way through their enemies; but it had become im-

1775. Dec.

practicable; and, after maintaining the struggle till the last hope was gone, at ten o'clock they gave themselves up. To the captives Carleton proved a humane and generous enemy. The loss of the British was inconsiderable; that of the Americans, in killed or wounded, was about sixty; in prisoners, between three and four hundred. 1775. Dec.

When the battle was over, thirteen bodies were found at the place now known as Pres-de-Ville. That of Cheesman, whose career had been brief but gallant, had fallen over the rocks. In the pathway lay Macpherson, the pure-minded, youthful enthusiast for liberty, as spotless as the new-fallen snow which was his winding-sheet; full of promise for war, lovely in temper, honored by the affection and confidence of his chief, dear to the army, leaving not his like behind him. There, too, by his side, lay Richard Montgomery, on the spot where he fell. At his death he was in the first month of his fortieth year. He was tall and slender, well-limbed, of a graceful address, and a strong and active frame. He could endure fatigue, and all changes and severities of climate. His judgment was cool, though he kindled in action, imparting confidence and sympathetic courage. Never negligent of duty, never avoiding danger, discriminating and energetic, he had the power of conducting free men by their voluntary love and esteem. An experienced soldier, he was well versed in letters and in natural science. In private life, he was a good husband, brother, and son, an amiable and faithful friend. The rectitude of his heart shone forth in his actions, which were habitually and unaffectedly directed by a nice moral sense. He overcame difficulties which others shunned to encounter. Foes and friends paid tribute to his worth. The governor, lieutenant-governor, and council of Quebec, and all the principal officers of the garrison, buried him and his aide-de-camp, Macpherson, with the honors of war.

At the news of his death, "the whole city of Philadelphia was in tears; every person seemed to have lost his nearest relative or heart friend." Congress proclaimed for him "their grateful remembrance, profound respect, and high veneration; and desiring to transmit to future ages a truly

1775. Dec. worthy example of patriotism, conduct, boldness of enterprise, insuperable perseverance, and contempt of danger and death," they reared a marble monument "to the glory of Richard Montgomery."

Frederic of Prussia gave him praise as a military chief. In the British parliament, the great defenders of liberty vied with each other in his praise. Barré, his veteran fellow-soldier in the late war, wept profusely as he expatiated on their fast friendship and participation of service in that season of enterprise and glory, and, holding up the British commanders in review, pronounced a glowing tribute to his superior merits. Edmund Burke contrasted the condition of the eight thousand men, starved, disgraced, and shut up within the single town of Boston, with the movements of the hero who in one campaign had conquered two thirds of Canada. "I," replied North, "cannot join in lamenting the death of Montgomery as a public loss. He was brave, he was able, he was humane, he was generous; but still he was only a brave, able, humane, and generous rebel. Curse on his virtues, they've undone his country." "The term of rebel," retorted Fox, "is no certain mark of disgrace. All the great assertors of liberty, the saviours of their country, the benefactors of mankind in all ages, have been called rebels. We owe the constitution which enables us to sit in this house to a rebellion."

So passed away the spirit of Montgomery, with the love of all that knew him, the grief of the nascent republic, and the eulogies of the world.

CHAPTER LV.

THE ROYAL GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA INVITES THE SERVANTS AND SLAVES TO RISE AGAINST THEIR MASTERS.

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, 1775.

THE central colonies hoped for reconciliation; the tories and the timid were waiting for commissioners; the credit of the continental paper money languished; the general congress in December, while they answered the royal proclamation of August by threats of retaliation and a scornful rejection of allegiance to parliament, professed allegiance to the king, and distinguished between their "resistance to tyranny" and "rebellion;" but all the while a steady current drifted the country towards independence. In New Jersey, the regular colonial assembly granted the usual annual support of the royal government. On the fifth of December, they considered the draft of a separate address to the king; but, as that mode of action tended to divide and insulate the provinces, Dickinson, Jay, and Wythe were sent by the general congress to Burlington, to dissuade from the measure. Admitted to the assembly, Dickinson excused the silence of the king, and bade them wait to find an answer in the conduct of the parliament and the administration. "After Americans were put to death without cause at Lexington," said he, "had the new continental congress drawn the sword and thrown away the scabbard, all lovers of liberty would have applauded. To convince Britain that we will fight, an army has been formed and Canada invaded. Success attends us everywhere; the savages who were to have been let loose to murder our wives and children are our friends; the Canadians fight in our cause; and Canada, from whence

1775. Dec.

armies were to overrun us, is conquered in as few months as it took Britain years: so that we have nothing to fear but from Europe, which is three thousand miles distant. Until this controversy, the strength and importance of our country was not known; united it cannot be conquered. The nations of Europe look with jealous eyes on the struggle; should Britain be unsuccessful in the next campaign, France will not sit still. Nothing but unity and bravery will bring Britain to terms; she wants to procure separate petitions, which we should avoid, for they would break our union and we should become a rope of sand; rest, then, on your former noble petition, and on that of united America." "We have nothing to expect from the mercy or justice of Britain," argued Jay; "vigor and unanimity, not petitions, are our only means of safety." Wythe, of Virginia, spoke for a few minutes to the same purpose; and the well-disposed assembly of New Jersey conformed to their joint advice.

1775. Dec.

Simultaneously with the intrigues to allure New Jersey into a separate system, Tryon, from a ship-of-war in New York harbor, recommended a separate petition to the inhabitants of New York; but William Smith, the historian, who busied himself with opening the plan privately to members of the provincial congress, met with the most signal rebuke. Roused by the insidious proposal, the New York convention, while it disclaimed the desire to become independent, attributed the existing discontent to the hostile attempts of the ministry to execute oppressive acts of the British parliament, designed for enslaving the American colonies; on the motion of John Morin Scott, they rejected the thought of "a separate declaration, as inconsistent with the glorious plan of American union;" on motion of Macdougall, they confirmed the deliberative powers of the continental congress; and they perfected their organization by establishing a committee of safety with full executive powers within the colony. The king would receive no communications from the general congress, and all separate overtures were at an end.

Meantime, France and the thirteen colonies were mutu-

ally attracted towards each other; and it is not easy to decide which of them made the first movement towards an intercourse. The continental congress in December voted to build thirteen ships-of-war, thus founding a navy, which was to be governed by a marine committee, consisting of one member from each colony; yet, as they still would not open their ports, they were in no condition to solicit an alliance. But Dumas, a Swiss by birth, residing in Holland, the liberal editor of Vattel's work on international law, had written to Franklin, his personal friend, that "all Europe wished the Americans the best success in the maintenance of their liberty:" on the twelfth of December, the congressional committee of secret correspondence authorized Arthur Lee, who was then in London, to ascertain the disposition of foreign powers; and Dumas, at the Hague, was charged with a similar commission. 1775. Dec.

Just then De Bonvouloir, the discreet emissary of Vergennes, arrived in Philadelphia; and through Francis Daymon, a Frenchman, the trusty librarian of the Library Company in that city, was introduced to Franklin and the other members of the secret committee, with whom he held several conferences by night. "Will France aid us? and at what price?" were the questions put to him. "France," answered he, "is well disposed to you; if she should give you aid, as she may, it will be on just and equitable conditions. Make your proposals, and I will present them." "Will it be prudent for us to send over a plenipotentiary?" asked the committee. "That," replied he, "would be precipitate and even hazardous, for what passes in France is known in London; but, if you will give me any thing in charge, I may receive answers well suited to guide your conduct; although I can guarantee nothing except that your confidence will not be betrayed." From repeated interviews, De Bonvouloir obtained such just information that his report to the French minister, though confusedly written, is in substance exact. He explained that "the Americans hesitated about a declaration of independence and an appeal to France; that the British king had not as yet done them evil enough; that they still waited to have more

of their towns destroyed and more of their houses burned, before they would completely abhor the emblems of British power; that a brig was despatched to Nantes for munitions of war, and an arrangement made for purchasing the same articles of France by way of St. Domingo; that skilful engineers were much wanted; that everybody in the colonies appeared to have turned soldier; that they had given up the English flag, and had taken for their devices a rattlesnake with thirteen rattles, and a mailed arm holding thirteen arrows." His communications were to form the subject of the most momentous deliberation which had engaged the attention of a French king for two centuries.

Some foreign commerce was required for the continuance of the war: the Americans had no magazine to replenish their little store of powder, no arsenal to furnish arms; their best dependence was on prizes, made under the pine-tree flag by the brave Manly and others, who cruised in armed ships with commissions from Washington; even flints were obtained only from captured store-ships, and it was necessary to fetch cannon from Ticonderoga. The men who enlisted for the coming year were desired to bring their own arms; those whose time expired were compelled to part with theirs at a valuation; for blankets the general appealed to
1775. Dec. the families of New England, asking one or more of every household; the villages, in their town-meetings, encouraged the supply of wood to the camp by voting a bounty from the town treasuries.

The enlistments for the new army went on slowly, for the New England men, willing to drive the enemy from Boston, were disinclined to engagements which would take them far from home, on wages to be paid in a constantly depreciating currency; besides, the continental bills were remitted so tardily, and in such inadequate amounts, that even those wages were not paid with regularity; and this negligence threatened "the destruction of the army." For want of funds to answer the accounts of the commissary and quartermaster, the troops were forced to submit to a reduced allowance. Washington himself felt keenly the habitual inattention of congress and its agents; and the sense of

suffering wrongfully and needlessly engendered discontent in his camp. He would have had the whole army like himself rise superior to every hardship; and, when there were complaints of unfulfilled engagements, angry bickerings about unadjusted dues, or demands for the computation of pay by lunar months, he grieved that the New England men should mar the beauty of their self-sacrificing patriotism by persistent eagerness for petty gains. 1775. Dec.

The Connecticut soldiers, whose enlistment expired early in December, were determined to leave the service. They were entreated to remain till the end of the year, and were ordered to remain at least for ten days, when they should be relieved; Leonard, one of their chaplains, preached to them on the duty of courage and subordination; nevertheless, many of "the Connecticut gentry" made the best of their way to their own firesides, some with their arms and ammunition. Washington would have had Trumbull make an example of them. Trumbull answered: "the pulse of a New England man beats high for liberty; his engagement in the service he thinks purely voluntary; when the time of enlistment is out, he thinks himself not further holden: this is the genius and spirit of our people." But the inhabitants along their homeward road expressed abhorrence at their quitting the army, and would scarcely furnish them with provisions, and the rebuke they met with in their towns drove many of them back to the camp. Others in Connecticut volunteered to take the places of those who withdrew; but Washington had, through the colonial governments, already called out three thousand men from the militia of Massachusetts, and two thousand from New Hampshire, who repaired to the camp with celerity, and cheerfully braved "the want of wood, barracks, and blankets." In this manner, with little aid from the general congress, he continued the siege of Boston, and enlisted a new army for the following year, as well as could be done without money in the treasury, or powder or arms in store. His ceaseless vigilance guarded against every danger; the fortifications were extended to Lechmere's Point, and every possible

landing-place for a sallying party from Boston was secured by intrenchments.

The press of New England avowed more and more distinctly the general expectation that America would soon form itself into a republic of united colonies. Such was become the prevailing desire of the army, although Lee still hoped to act a part in bringing about a reconcilement through a change of the British ministry. This is the real purport of an elaborate letter addressed by him to Burgoyne, who was about to sail for England; for which he excused himself to an American friend, by saying: "I am convinced that you have not virtue enough for independence, nor do I think it calculated for your happiness; besides, I have some remaining prejudices as an Englishman."

In December, Lee left the camp for ten days, to inspect the harbor of Newport and plan works for its defence. His visit, which had no permanent effect, was chiefly remarkable for his arbitrary conduct in "administering a very strong oath to some of the leading tories." After his departure, the British vessels of war plundered the islands in Narragansett Bay as before.

Meantime, Dunmore, driven from the land of Virginia, maintained the command of the water by means of a flotilla, composed of the "Mercury" of twenty-four guns, the "Kingfisher" of sixteen, the "Otter" of fourteen, with other ships, and light vessels, and tenders, which he had engaged in the king's service. At Norfolk, a town of about six thousand inhabitants, a newspaper was published by John Holt. About noon on the last day of September, Dunmore, finding fault with its favoring "sedition and rebellion," sent on shore a small party, who, meeting no resistance, seized and brought off two printers and all the materials of a printing-office, so that he could publish from his ship a gazette on the side of the king. The outrage, as we shall see, produced retaliation.

1775. Oct. In October, Dunmore repeatedly landed detachments to seize arms wherever he could find them. Thus far Virginia had not resisted the British by force; the

war began in that colony with the defence of Hampton, a small village at the end of the isthmus between York and James Rivers. An armed sloop had been driven on its shore in a very violent gale; its people took out of her six swivels and other stores, made some of her men prisoners, and then set her on fire. Dunmore blockaded the port; they summoned to their assistance a company of "shirt men," as the British called the Virginia regulars from the hunting-shirt which was their uniform, and another company of minute men, besides a body of militia.

On the twenty-sixth, Dunmore sent some of the tenders close into Hampton Roads to destroy the town. The guard marched out to repel them; and, the moment they came within gunshot, George Nicholas, who commanded the Virginians, discharged his musket at one of the tenders. It was the first gun fired in Virginia against the British: his example was followed by his party. Retarded by boats which had been sunk across the channel, the British on that day vainly attempted to land. In the following night, the Culpepper riflemen were despatched to the aid of Hampton; and William Woodford, colonel of the second regiment of Virginia, and next in rank to Patrick Henry, was sent by the committee of safety from Williamsburg to take the direction. The next day, the British, having cut their way through the sunken boats, renewed the attack; but the riflemen poured upon them a heavy fire, killing a few and wounding more. One of the tenders was taken with its armament and seven seamen; the rest were with difficulty towed out of the creek. The Virginians lost not a man. This is the first conflict of the revolution in the Ancient Dominion; and its honors belonged to the Virginians.

While yet a prey to passion after this repulse, Dunmore was informed that a hundred and twenty or thirty North Carolina rebels were marching into the colony, to occupy the Great Bridge, which, at a distance of nine or ten miles from Norfolk, crossed the Elizabeth River. It rested on each side upon firm dry ground, which rose like islands above the wide spreading morasses, and could be approached only by causeways; so that it formed a very 1775. Nov.

strong pass, protecting the approach to Norfolk by land from the county of Princess Anne and from a part of the county of Norfolk. He had twice received detachments from the fourteenth regiment, which had been stationed at St. Augustine: collecting all of them who were able to do duty, and attended by volunteers from Norfolk, Dunmore on the fourteenth of November hastened to the Great Bridge. Finding no Carolinians, he marched rapidly to disperse a body of militia who were assembled at Kemp's Landing, in Princess Anne. They lay in an ambuscade to receive him, and fired upon his party from a thicket; but, being inferior in numbers, discipline, and arms, they soon fled, panic struck and in confusion, leaving their commander and six others as prisoners. On his return, he ordered a fort to be built at the Great Bridge, on the side nearest Norfolk.

1775. Nov.

Encouraged by "this most trifling success," he raised the king's flag, and, publishing a proclamation which he had signed on the seventh, he established martial law, required every person capable of bearing arms to resort to his standard under penalty of forfeiture of life and property, and declared freedom to "all indented servants, negroes, or others, appertaining to rebels," if they would "join for the reducing the colony to a proper sense of its duty." The effect of his invitation to convicts and slaves to rise against their masters was not limited to their ability to serve in the army. "I hope," said he, "it will oblige the rebels to disperse to take care of their families and property." The men to whose passions he appealed were either criminals, bound to labor in expiation of their misdeeds, or barbarians, some of them freshly imported from Africa, with tropical passions seething in their veins, and frames rendered strong by abundant food and out-of-door toil; they formed the majority of the population on tide-water, and were distributed among the lonely plantations in clusters around the wives and children of their owners. The measure had been reported in advance to the ministry, had appeared an "encouraging" one to the king, and had formed part of a system which Dunmore had concerted with General Gage and

General Howe. He also sent for the small detachment of regulars stationed in Illinois and the north-west; authorized John Connolly to raise a regiment in the backwoods of Virginia and Pennsylvania; commissioned Mackee, a deputy superintendent, to raise another of Indians among the savages of Ohio and the western border; and directed these different bodies to march to Alexandria. At the same time, he himself proposed to "raise two regiments, one of white people, to be called the Queen's Own Loyal Virginia; the other of negroes, to be called Lord Dunmore's Ethiopian." Connolly was arrested in Maryland in November; and thus the movements at the west were prevented.

At the news of Dunmore's proclamation, the general congress promptly invited Virginia, as it had invited New Hampshire and South Carolina, to institute a government of her own; and this was of the greater moment, because she was first in wealth, numbers, and extent of territory. A thrill of indignation ran through Virginia, effacing all differences of party. William Campbell and Gibson were on the march from Fincastle and West Augusta, with rifle companies of "as fine men as ever were seen." In the valley of the Blue Ridge, the congregations of Germans, regardless of their different lineage and tongue, and quickened by the preaching of Muhlenberg, stood ready at the first summons to take up arms for the defence of the men of the low country. 1775. Nov.

"If that man is not crushed before spring," wrote Washington, of Dunmore, "he will become the most formidable enemy of America. Motives of resentment actuate his conduct to a degree equal to the total destruction of Virginia. His strength will increase as a snowball by rolling, and faster, if some expedient cannot be hit upon to convince the slaves and servants of the impotency of his designs." The Virginians could plead, and did plead, that "their assemblies had repeatedly attempted to prevent the horrid traffic in slaves, and had been frustrated by the cruelty and covetousness of English merchants, who prevailed on the king to repeal their merciful acts; that the English encouraged and upheld slavery, while the present masters of

negroes in Virginia pitied their condition, wished in general to make it easy and comfortable, and would willingly not only prevent any more negroes from losing their freedom, but restore it to such as had already unhappily lost it;" and they foresaw that, whatever they themselves might suffer from a rising, the weight of sorrow would fall on the insurgent slaves.

1775. Nov.

But, in truth, the cry of Dunmore did not rouse among the Africans a passion for freedom. To them bondage in Virginia was not a lower condition of being than their former one; they had no regrets for ancient privileges lost; their memories prompted no demand for political changes; no struggling aspirations of their own had invited Dunmore's interposition; no memorial of their grievances had preceded his offers. What might have been accomplished, had he been master of the country, and used an undisputed possession to embody and train the negroes, cannot be told; but as it was, though he boasted that they flocked to his standard, none combined to join him from a longing for an improved condition, or even from ill-will to their masters.

The innumerable affinities which had united the people with the British government still retained great force; a vague dread of taking up arms against their sovereign pervaded the mind of the common people; none had as yet renounced allegiance; after the success at Kemp's Landing, nearly a hundred of the men who were in the field the day before came in and took the oath of allegiance which Dunmore had framed; and, in the following three weeks, it was accepted by nearly three thousand; but of these less than three or four hundred could bear arms, of which not half so many knew the use. Norfolk, almost entirely deserted by native Virginians, became the refuge of the Scotch, who, as the factors of Glasgow merchants, had long regulated the commercial exchanges of the colony, and who were now embodied as the loyal militia of Norfolk. The patriots resolved to take the place.

On the twenty-eighth of November, the Virginian forces under Woodford, consisting of his own regiment and five companies of the Culpepper minute men, with whom John

Marshall, afterwards chief justice of the United States, served as a lieutenant, marched to the Great Bridge, and threw up a breastwork on the side opposite to the British fort. Having no arms but the musket and the rifle, which the fort was strong enough to withstand, they made many attempts to cross the branch on a raft, so as to attack their enemy in the rear; but they were always repulsed. Should the fort be given up, the road to Norfolk was open to the victors; in the dilemma between his weakness and his danger, Dunmore resolved to risk an attempt to fall on the Virginians by surprise. On Friday the eighth of December, after dark, he sent about two hundred men, composed of all that had arrived of the fourteenth regiment, and of officers, sailors, and gunners from the ships, mixed with townsmen of Norfolk. They arrived at the Great Bridge in the night, and halted for rest and refreshment. The Virginians could be approached only over a causeway of about one hundred and sixty yards in length, at the end of which was their breastwork. After the break of day, and before sunrise, Leslie planted two field-pieces between the bridge and the causeway, and gave orders for the attack; but the Virginians had just beat the reveille, and, at the first discharge of the cannon, the bravest of them rushed to the trenches. The regulars, about one hundred and twenty in number, led by Fordyce, a captain in the fourteenth, were met on the causeway by a well-directed fire; while Stevens, with a party of the Culpepper minute men, posted on an eminence about a hundred yards to the left, took them in flank: they wavered; Fordyce, with a courage which was the admiration of all beholders, rallied and led them on, when, struck with many rifle-balls, some say fourteen, he staggered and fell dead within a few steps of the breastwork, or, according to one account, having had his hand upon it. The two companies of negroes kept out of the way; so did the loyalists of Norfolk; the regulars displayed the conduct of veterans; but discouraged by the fall of their leader, and disabled by the incessant fire of the American sharpshooters, they retreated, after a struggle of about fourteen minutes, losing at least sixty-one in killed and wounded.

1775. Dec.

After the firing was over, the Virginians, who lost not one man, ran to bring in those of their enemies who needed the surgeon's aid. "For God's sake, don't murder us," cried one of the sufferers, who had been taught to fear the scalping-knife. "Put your arm round my neck," replied the Virginian, lifting him up and walking with him slowly and carefully to the breastwork. When Leslie saw two of the "shirt men" tenderly removing a wounded soldier from the bridge, he stepped upon the platform of the fort, and, bowing with great respect, thanked them for their compassion. Fordyce was buried by the Virginians with the honors due to his gallantry. A forward braggart urged Woodford to attack the fort with muskets alone; but Pendleton had charged him "to risk as little as possible;" and he wisely put aside the foolhardy proposal.

In the following night, Leslie, dejected by the loss of his nephew, abandoned the fort and retreated to Norfolk. Nothing could exceed the consternation of its Scotch inhabitants: rich factors, with their wives and children, leaving their large property behind, betook themselves on board ships, in midwinter, with scarcely the necessaries of life. Crowds of poor people and runaway negroes were huddled together, destitute of every comfort and even of pure air.

1775. Dec. On the fourteenth, Robert Howe, who had arrived from North Carolina, as the higher officer, took possession of Norfolk. Just one week later, the "Liverpool" ship-of-war and the brig "Maria" were piloted into the harbor. They brought three thousand stand of arms, with which Dunmore had promised to imbody negroes and Indians enough to reduce Virginia. Martin, of North Carolina, despatched a tender to claim his part of the arms, and obtained a thousand.

The governor sent a flag of truce on shore to inquire if he and the fleet might be supplied with fresh provisions, and was answered in the negative. Showing his instructions to Belew, the captain of the "Liverpool," the two concurred in opinion that Norfolk was "a town in actual rebellion, accessible to the king's ships;" and they prepared to carry out the king's instructions for such "a case."

CHAPTER LVI.

THE NEW YEAR, 1776.

JANUARY, 1776.

NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1776, was the saddest that ever broke on the women and children then in Norfolk. Warned of their danger by the commander of the squadron, there was for them no refuge. The "Kingfisher" was stationed at the upper end of Norfolk; a little below her the "Otter;" Belew, in the "Liverpool," anchored near the middle of the town; and next him lay Dunmore; the rest of the fleet was moored in the harbor. Between three and four in the afternoon, the "Liverpool" opened its fire upon the borough; the other ships immediately followed the example, and a severe cannonade was begun from about sixty pieces of cannon. Dunmore then himself, as night was coming on, ordered out several boats to burn warehouses on the wharfs, and hailed to Belew to set fire to a large brig which lay in the dock. The vessels of the fleet emulated each other in sending boats on shore to spread the flames along the river; and, as the buildings were chiefly of pine wood, the conflagration, favored by the wind, spread with amazing rapidity, and soon became general. Mothers with little ones in their arms were seen by the glare, running through the shower of cannon-balls to get out of their range. Two or three persons were hit; and the scene became one of extreme horror and confusion. Several times the British attempted to land with cannon, but were driven back. The cannonade did not abate till ten at night; after a short pause, it was renewed, but with less fury, and was kept up till two the next morning. The flames, which had made their way from street to street, and which Howe and Woodford, the American command- 1776. Jan.

ers, made every effort to arrest, raged for three days, till four fifths of the houses were reduced to ashes and heaps of ruins.

In this manner, the royal governor burned and laid waste the best town in England's oldest and most loyal colony, to which Elizabeth had given a name, Raleigh devoted his fortune, and Shakespeare and Bacon and Herbert foretokened greatness; a colony where the people of themselves had established the national church, and where many were proud that their ancestors, in the day of the British commonwealth, had been faithful to the line of kings.

When Washington learned the fate of the rich emporium of his own "country," for so he then called Virginia, his breast heaved with waves of anger and grief. "I hope," said he, "this, and the threatened devastation of other places, will unite the whole country in one indissoluble band against a nation which seems lost to every sense of virtue, and those feelings which distinguish a civilized people from the most barbarous savages."

1776. Jan. On the first day of January, 1776, the tri-colored American banner, not yet spangled with stars, but showing thirteen stripes of alternate red and white in the field, and the united red and white crosses of Saint George and Saint Andrew on a blue ground in the corner, was unfurled over the new continental army round Boston, which, at that moment of its greatest weakness, consisted of but nine thousand six hundred and fifty men.

On that day, free negroes stood in the ranks by the side of white men. In the beginning of the war, they had entered the provincial army; the first general order which was issued by Ward, had required a return, among other things, of "the complexion" of the soldiers; and black men, like others, were retained in the service after the troops were adopted by the continent. We have seen Edward Rutledge defeated in his attempt to compel their discharge; in October, the conference at the camp, with Franklin, Harrison, and Lynch, thought it proper to exclude them from the new enlistment; but Washington, at the crisis of his distress, finding that they were very much dis-

satisfied at being discarded, reversed the decision and asked the approval of congress. That body appointed Wythe, Samuel Adams, and Wilson, to deliberate on the question; and, on the report of their able committee, they voted, "that the free negroes, who had served faithfully in the army at Cambridge, might be re-enlisted therein, but no others." The right of free negroes to take part in the defence of the country having thus been partially admitted by the highest power, the limitation was lost sight of, and they served in the ranks of the American armies during every period of the war.

The enlistments were embarrassed by the low state of Washington's military chest. He could neither pay off the old army to the last of December, when their term expired, nor give assurances for the punctual pay of the militia. At one time in January, he had but about ten thousand dollars at Cambridge; and that small sum was held in reserve. The Massachusetts council was authorized to lend him fifty thousand pounds. It would have been good policy to have paid a large bounty and engaged recruits for the war; but this measure congress refused to warrant; and it was left to the government of Massachusetts, with the aid of the rest of New England, to keep up the numbers of the army while it remained on her soil. For that end, five thousand of her militia were summoned to the field.

The army officers of Massachusetts had instilled into the mind of Washington a dread of calling in the minute men and militia, lest they should destroy the little subordination he had been laboring to establish, and refuse to remain a moment longer than they themselves might choose. The result dispelled his fears; and on the nineteenth of December, 1775, he wrote to congress: "The militia that are come in both from this province and New Hampshire are very fine-looking men, and go through their duty with great alacrity. The despatch, made both by the people in marching and the legislative powers in complying with my requisition, has given me infinite satisfaction." But the neglect of congress had reduced his army to a state of disintegration by their dilatory and inadequate provision

1775. Dec. 19.

for new enlistments. The troops before Boston were a mixture of new recruits and transient militia, whose frequent mutation called for a constant renewal of elementary instruction. There was a dearth of bayonets, a want of at least two thousand muskets; the artillery was poor, and was chiefly a gathering from accidental sources. There was no store of powder. There was no money in the military chest, for the persons designated to sign the bills were too indolent to act with promptness. Some members of congress were specially eager to give profitable occupation to ship-builders among their constituents, and, with a strange perversity, what little powder was obtained was diverted from Washington to vessels which could not be prepared for sea before more ample stores would arrive. They refused to consider that Washington's inactivity was due in part to themselves, in part to causes which, anxious as he was "to keep above water in the esteem of mankind," he was compelled to conceal from the public, from his friends, and even from most of his officers. Yet the chimney-corner heroes among the legislators grew impatient at the slowness of the war, and, after a long and serious
1775. Dec. 22. debate, on the twenty-second carried a resolution authorizing Washington "to attack Boston in any manner which he might deem expedient, notwithstanding the town might thereby be destroyed." In forwarding the resolve, Hancock announced it as having been adopted after a long and most serious debate, and added: "May God crown your attempt with success. I most heartily wish it, though individually I may be the greatest sufferer."

1776. Jan. Receiving what was plainly a direction to attack the British forces in spite of his want of arms, ammunition, and money, and in the moment of his greatest perplexity from deficiencies and changes of men, Washington, for the first time in his military career, was compelled to show the spirit with which he encountered a complication of difficulties. Repelling the accusation of inactivity, he answered the superior civil power with dignity: "It is not perhaps in the pages of history to furnish a case like ours: to maintain a post within musket-shot of the enemy for six

months together without powder, and at the same time to disband one army and recruit another within that distance of twenty odd British regiments, is more, probably, than ever was attempted." But the order of congress was never out of his mind; and when his army was reorganized, and the shallow bay west of Boston was frozen over, on the sixteenth of February he called together his general officers, as his instructions required of him, and urged them to sanction a general assault on the town. Success might be hoped for, if officers and men, who were accustomed to fight from behind defences, would encounter the enemy with unflinching courage on open ground. But the brigadiers had discoursed on the subject with the field-officers of the regiments, and had found them reluctant; the council of war disapproved the proposal as exceedingly hazardous, and advised only to prepare for taking possession of Dorchester Hill, with a view of drawing out the enemy. Washington reported to congress the almost unanimous overruling of his opinion by his military advisers, and added for himself: "I was ready, willing, and desirous of making the assault, under a firm hope, if the men would have stood by me, of a favorable result." 1776. Feb.

His situation was irksome; the whole continent was anxiously expecting some great event, and he was restrained by the want of the means necessary for any military operation. The state of his army gave him many an uneasy hour when all around him were wrapped in sleep; and he often considered how much happier would have been his lot, if, instead of accepting the chief command, he had taken his musket on his shoulder, and entered the ranks. "In the worst event," said he, "my lands on the Ohio will serve for an asylum." Could he have justified the measure to posterity and his own conscience, he would gladly have retired at once to the backwoods, even though it had been to live in a wigwam; but he never countenanced the thought of sending back his commission to his hard task-masters. If he had not consulted the public good more than his own tranquillity, he would have put every thing on the cast of a die, and forced a battle at every disadvantage. The world gave him

credit for an army of twenty thousand well-armed men; and yet, at the moment when Howe was receiving re-enforcements, he had been left with less than half that number, including the sick, those on furlough, those on command, and those who were neither properly armed nor clothed. "For more than two months past," said he, "I have scarcely emerged from one difficulty before I have been plunged into another; how it will end, God in his great goodness will direct; I am thankful for his protection to this time."

1776. Feb.

In June of the preceding year, when Lord North communicated his proposition as the ultimatum of British justice, Washington would have had it received as such, and would have acted accordingly; on the echo from England of the battle of Bunker Hill, he saw that every hope of accommodation was delusive; the new year brought the king's speech to parliament in November, and he no longer held back his opinion that independence should be declared. Those around him shared his resolution; Greene wrote to his friend Ward, a delegate from Rhode Island to the general congress: "The interests of mankind hang upon that body of which you are a member: you stand the representative not of America only, but of the friends of liberty and the supporters of the rights of human nature in the whole world; permit me from the sincerity of my heart, ready at all times to bleed in my country's cause, to recommend a declaration of independence, and call upon the world and the great God who governs it to witness the necessity, propriety, and rectitude thereof. The king," he said further, "breathes revenge, and threatens us with destruction: America must raise an empire of permanent duration, supported upon the grand pillars of truth, freedom, and religion."

The people were more and more possessed with a silent, meditative feeling of independence. Their old affection for England remained paramount till the king's proclamation declared them rebels; then the new conviction demanded utterance; and, as the debates in congress were secret, it had no outlet but the press.

The writer who imbodied in words the vague longing of the country, mixed with crude notions of his own, was Thomas Paine, at that time a little under forty years of age; the son of a Quaker of Norfolk in England, brought up in the faith of George Fox and Penn, the only school in England where he could have learned the principles which he was now to assert. He had been in America not much more than a year; but in that time he had frequented the society of Franklin, Rittenhouse, Clymer, and Samuel Adams. His essay, when finished, was shown to Franklin, — at whose suggestion it had been written, — to Rittenhouse, to Samuel Adams, and to Rush; and the latter gave it the title of COMMON SENSE. 1776. Jan.

"The design and end of government," it was reasoned, "is freedom and security. In the early ages of the world, mankind were equals in the order of creation; the heathen introduced government by kings, which the will of the Almighty, as declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproved. To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a lessening of ourselves, so the second might put posterity under the government of a rogue or a fool. Nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule. England, since the conquest, hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones.

"The most plausible plea which hath ever been offered in favor of hereditary succession is that it preserves a nation from civil wars; whereas the whole history of England disowns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have reigned in that distracted kingdom since the conquest, in which time there have been no less than eight civil wars and nineteen rebellions. In short, monarchy and succession have laid not this kingdom only, but the world, in blood and ashes.

"The nearer any government approaches to a republic, the less business there is for a king; in England, a king hath little more to do than to make war and give away places.

"Volumes have been written on the struggle between

England and America, but the period of debate is closed. Arms must decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

"The sun never shone on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent, of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in it, even to the end of time.

"But Great Britain has protected us, say some. 1776. Jan. She did not protect us from our enemies on our account, but from her enemies on her own account. America would have flourished as much, and probably more, had no European power had any thing to do with governing her. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as Americans, but as the subjects of Great Britain.

"Britain is the parent country, say some; then the more shame upon her conduct. But Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America: this new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of Europe; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent. The phrase of parent or mother country, applied to England only, is false, selfish, narrow, and ungenerous; but, admitting that we were all of English descent, Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name.

"Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain e colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defi- the world. What have we to do with setting the defiance? Our plan is commerce; and that, well to, will secure us the friendship of all Europe. I e the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show advantage that this continent can reap by being d with Great Britain.

Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form ial connection with any part of it. It is the true

interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do while by her dependence on Britain she is the makeweight in the scale of British politics.

"Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of Heaven. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she does not conquer herself by delay and timidity. 1776. Jan.

"It is repugnant to reason and the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose that this continent can long remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain do not think so. The authority of Great Britain, sooner or later, must have an end; and the event cannot be far off. The business of this continent, from its rapid progress to maturity, will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience by a power so distant from us and so very ignorant of us. There is something absurd in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island: in no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than the primary planet. They belong to different systems; England to Europe, America to itself. Every thing short of independence is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time when going a little further would render this continent the glory of the earth. Admitting that matters were now made up, the king will have a negative over the whole legislation of this continent; and he will suffer no law to be made here but such as suits his purpose. We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America as by submitting to laws made for us in England.

"Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related. The best terms which we can expect to obtain can amount to no more than a guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age. Emigrants of property will not come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread. Nothing but a continental form of government

can keep the peace of the continent inviolate from civil wars.

"The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head; if there is any true cause of fear respecting independence, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Let a continental conference be held, to frame a continental charter, or charter of the united colonies.

1776. Jan.

But where, say some, is the king of America? He reigns above; in America, the law is king; in free countries there ought to be no other.

"All men, whether in England or America, confess that a separation between the countries will take place one time or other. To find out the very time, we need not go far, for the time hath found us. The present, likewise, is that peculiar time which never happens to a nation but once, the time of forming itself into a government. Until we consent that the seat of government in America be legally and authoritatively occupied, where will be our freedom, where our property?

"Nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined declaration for independence. It is unreasonable to suppose that France or Spain will give us assistance, if we mean only to use that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach. While we profess ourselves the subjects of Britain, we must in the eyes of foreign nations be considered as rebels. A manifesto published and despatched to foreign courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and declaring that we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connection with her, at the same time assuring all such courts of our desire of entering into trade with them, would produce more good effects to this continent than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

"Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual; our prayers have been rejected with disdain; reconciliation is now a fallacious dream. Bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature; can you hereafter love,

honor, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? Ye that tell us of harmony, can ye restore to us the time that is past? The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'tis time to part. The last cord is now broken; the people of England are presenting addresses against us.

"A government of our own is our natural right. Ye that love mankind, that dare oppose not only tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the Old World is overrun with oppression; Freedom hath been hunted round the globe; Europe regards her like a stranger; and England hath given her warning to depart; oh, receive the fugitive, and prepare an asylum for mankind." 1776. Jan.

The publication of "Common Sense," which was brought out on the eighth of January, was most opportune; the day before, the general congress had heard of the burning of Norfolk; on the day itself, the king's speech at the opening of parliament arrived. "The tyrant!" said Samuel Adams; "his speech breathes the most malevolent spirit, and determines my opinion of its author as a man of a wicked heart. I have heard that he is his own minister; why, then, should we cast the odium of distressing mankind upon his minions? Guilt must lie at his door; divine vengeance will fall on his head;" and, with the aid of Wythe of Virginia, the patriot set vigorously to work to bring on a confederation and independence.

The friends of the proprietary government stood in the way. The pamphlet of "Common Sense," which came suddenly into every one's hands, was written outside of their influence; and its doctrines threatened their overthrow. On the day after its publication, Wilson, to arrest the rapid development of opinion, came to congress with the king's speech in his hand; and, quoting from it the words which charged the colonists with aiming at a separation, he moved the appointment of a committee to explain to their constituents and to the world the principles and grounds of their opposition, and their present intentions respecting independence. He was strongly supported. On the other hand, Samuel Adams insisted that congress had

already been explicit enough; and, apprehensive that they might get themselves upon dangerous ground, he rallied the bolder members in the hope to defeat the proposal; but, in the absence of John Adams, even his colleagues, Cushing and Paine, sided with Wilson, and carried the vote of Massachusetts as a part of his majority. When Cushing's constituents heard of his wavering, they elected Elbridge Gerry to his place; at the moment, Samuel Adams repaired for consolation to Franklin. In a free conversation, these two great sons of Boston agreed that confederation must be speedily brought on, even though the concurrence of all the colonies could not be obtained. "If none of the rest will join," said Samuel Adams to Franklin, "I will endeavor to unite the New England colonies in confederating." "I approve your proposal," said Franklin; "and, if you succeed, I will cast in my lot among you."

But in New England the actors who obeyed the living oracles of freedom wrought in darkness and in doubt; the formation of a new government was like passing through death to life. The town of Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, disavowed the intention of separating from the parent country; so did the convention of that colony, which was the first to frame a government of its own: they retained their old forms of a house of representatives and a council; they provided no substitute for their governor who had fled, and merged the executive power in the two branches of the legislature, but only during "the unnatural contest with Great Britain."

1776. Jan.

In Massachusetts, the hope of an accommodation with the mother country still haunted the moderate party; but the leaders of opinion said that they would not consent to treat at all, unless the British commissioners should bring powers to treat with congress. John Adams, who was then at home, dissuaded [illegible] petitioning congress for leave to choose a governor, [illegible]ed his zeal for carrying on hostili[illegible]stance of the southern col-o[illegible]re to New England.

[illegible] voted unhesitatingly to put [illegible]nce; but, moved by the mild-

ness with which their proprietary government had been administered, on the eleventh of January they bore their testimony to the equity of the English constitution, sanctioned no military operations but for protection, and forbade their delegates in congress to assent to any proposition for independence, foreign alliance, or confederation.

Moreover, Lord Drummond, who represented a large proprietary interest in New Jersey, came to Philadelphia, and exhibited a paper which, as he pretended, had been approved by each of the ministers, and which promised freedom to America in point of taxation and internal police, and the restoration of the charter of Massachusetts. Duped by his arts, Lynch, a delegate of South Carolina, who had written to the north that John Adams should be watched because his intentions might be wicked, and would have excluded him from congress for having accepted the office of chief justice in his own state, thought even of recommending the proposals. Besides, it was expected by many that agents, selected from among the friends of America, would be sent from England with full powers to grant every reasonable measure of redress. 1776. Jan.

It was time for Franklin to speak out; for he best knew the folly of expecting peace from British commissioners. On the sixteenth, his plan of a confederacy was called up, and he endeavored to get a day fixed for its consideration; but he was opposed by Hooper and by Dickinson, who carried the question against him. Four days later, the Quakers of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, at a meeting of their representatives in Philadelphia, gave their testimony that the setting up and putting down of kings and governments is God's peculiar prerogative. Yet the votes of congress showed its determination to continue the struggle; twenty-seven battalions were ordered to be raised in addition to those with Washington; it was intended to send ten thousand men into Canada; Arnold, on the motion of Gadsden, was unanimously appointed a brigadier-general; powder and saltpetre began to be received in large quantities, and the establishment of powder-mills was successfully encouraged. The war expenditures authorized for the year

were computed at ten millions of dollars; and the several colonies lavished treasure on special military preparations.

In New Jersey, the letters of the royal governor were intercepted; and their tenor was so malignant that Lord Stirling placed him under arrest. "Twelve months ago," said the people of Georgia, "we were declared rebels, and yet we meet with no opposition; Britain may destroy our towns, but we can retire to the back country and tire her out." On the appearance of a small squadron in the Savannah, Joseph Habersham, on the eighteenth of January, with a party of volunteers, confined Sir James Wright under a guard in his own house. The other crown officers either fled or were seized. After an imprisonment of more than three weeks, the governor escaped by night to Bonaventure, rowed through Tybee Creek to the "Scarborough" man-of-war, and reported "Georgia to be totally under the influence of the Carolina people; nothing but force could pave the way for the commissioners."

When the Virginia convention, which had been in session from the first of December, heard of the burning of Norfolk, and that England held dominion in the waters of the Chesapeake, they resolved to lay waste its shores, promising indemnity to the sufferers. The commanding officer, by their order, after assisting the inhabitants to remove with their effects, demolished in Norfolk and its suburbs all remaining houses which "might be useful to their enemies."

1776. Jan.

For the defence of Virginia, the two regiments already in service were increased, and seven more were ordered to be raised. Of one of these, Hugh Mercer was elected colonel; the command of another, to be composed of Germans from the Blue Ridge, was given to the Lutheran minister, Peter Muhlenberg, who left the pulpit to form out of his several congregations one of the most perfect battalions in the army.

The continental congress had interfered with the old colonial restraints on trade as little as the necessity for purchasing military stores would permit. The impulse for a world-wide commerce came from Virginia. On motion of

Archibald Cary, her convention on the twentieth of January instructed her delegates in favor of opening the ports of the colonies to all persons willing to trade with them, Great Britain, Ireland, and the British West Indies excepted. That this recommendation should have been left, after ten months of war, to be proposed by a provincial convention, is another evidence of the all but invincible attachment of the colonies to England. Thus the progress of the war brought to America independence in all but the name; she had her treasury, her army, the rudiments of a navy, incipient foreign relations, and a striving after free commerce with the world. She was self-existent, whether she would be so or not; through no other way would the king allow her to hope for rest.

The declaration of independence was silently but steadily prepared in the convictions of all the people, just as every spire of grass is impearled by the dew, and reflects the morning sun. The many are more sagacious, more disinterested, more courageous, than the few. Language was their spontaneous creation; the science of ethics, as the word implies, is deduced from the inspirations of their conscience; law itself, as the greatest jurists have perceived, is necessarily moulded by their inward nature; the poet imbodies in words their oracles and their litanies; the philosopher draws ideal thought from the storehouse of their mind; the national heart is the great reservoir of noble resolutions and of high, enduring designs. It was the common people whose craving for the recognition of the unity of the universe and for a perfect mediator between themselves and the Infinite bore the Christian religion to its triumph over every worldly influence; it was the public faith that, in the days of the Reformation, sought abstract truth behind forms that had been abused, and outward acts that had lost their significance; and now the popular desire was once more the voice of the harbinger, crying in the wilderness. The people, whose spirit far outran conventions and congresses, had grown weary of atrophied institutions, and longed to fathom the mystery of the life of the public life. Instead of continuing a super- 1776. Jan.

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CHAPTER LVII.

BRITAIN ENGAGES FOREIGN TROOPS.

NOVEMBER, 1775—FEBRUARY, 1776.

HAD the king employed none but British troops, the war by land against the colonies must have been of short duration. His army was largely recruited from American loyalists; from emigrants driven to America by want, and too recently arrived to be imbued with its principles; from Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland; and from Germany. Treaties were also made for subsidiary troops.

When Sir Joseph Yorke, the British ambassador at the Hague, proposed the transfer of a brigade from the service of the Netherlands to that of his sovereign, the young stadholder wrote directly to his cousin the king of England, to decline what was desired. He received a reply, renewing the request. In 1599, the Low Countries pledged to Queen Elizabeth, as security for a loan, three important fortresses, which she garrisoned with her own troops; in 1616, the Dutch discharged the debt, and the garrisons were withdrawn from the cautionary towns except an English and a Scottish brigade, which passed into the service of the confederacy. William III. recalled the former; and in 1749 the privilege of recruiting in Scotland was withdrawn from the latter, of which the rank and file, now consisting of more than twenty-one hundred men, were of all nations, though its officers were still Scotchmen or their descendants. In favor of the loan of the troops, it was urged that the officers already owed allegiance to the British king, and were therefore well suited to enter his service; that common interests connected the two countries; that the present occasion offered to the Prince of Orange "the unique

advantage and particular honor" of strengthening the bonds of close friendship which had been "more or less enfeebled" by the neutrality of the United Provinces during the last French war.

In the states-general, Zealand and Utrecht consented; the province of Holland objected, that a commercial state should never but from necessity become involved in any quarrel. Baron van der Capellen tot den Pol, one of the nobles of Overyssel, the Gracchus of the Dutch republic, reasoned against the measure: that furnishing the troops would be a departure from the true policy of the strictest neutrality; that his country had fruitlessly sacrificed her prosperity to advance the greatness of England; that she had shed rivers of blood under pretence of establishing a balance of power, and had only strengthened an empire which was now assuming a more dreadful monarchy over the seas than ever had been known; that she would find herself, as formerly, engaged in a baleful war with France, her most powerful neighbor and her natural ally in the defence of the liberty of commerce; that a war between Britain and France would bring advantage to the navigation of the republic, if she would but maintain her neutrality; that she had never derived any benefit from a close alliance with England; that, in the war of succession which gave to that power the key to the Mediterranean, she had nothing for her share but the total waste of her forces and her treasure; that she had religiously observed her treaties, and yet England denied her the stipulated safety of merchandise in free bottoms, and searched and arbitrarily confiscated her ships. Besides, janizaries should be hired to subdue the colonists, rather than the troops of a free state. Why should a nation, who had themselves borne the title of rebels and freed themselves from oppression by the edge of their swords, employ their troops in crushing what some were pleased to call a rebellion of the Americans, who yet were an example and encouragement to all nations, worthy of the esteem of the whole world as brave men, defending with moderation and with intrepidity the rights which God and not the British legislature gave them as men!

These ideas, once set in motion, were sure to win the day; but the states of Overyssel suppressed all explicit declarations against England; and the states-general, wishing to avoid every appearance of discourtesy, consented to lend the brigade, on the condition that it never should be used out of Europe. This was in fact a refusal; the brigade was never accepted by the English, who, during the tardy course of the discussion, had obtained supplies of men from Germany. The electors and landgraves and reigning dukes of that empire assumed the right of engaging in wars for their personal profit, and hiring out their troops according to their own pleasure. The custom became so general that, for the gain of their princes, and pay and plunder for themselves, German troops were engaged in every great contest that raged from Poland to Lisbon, from the North Sea to Naples, and were sometimes arrayed in the same battle on opposite sides.

So soon as it became known that the king of England, unable to supply the losses in his regiments by enlistments within his own realm, desired recruits from Germany, crowds of adventurers volunteered their aid. He had scruples about accepting their offers, saying: "The giving commissions to German officers to get men, in plain English, amounts to making me a kidnapper, which I cannot think a very honorable occupation;" but he continued a contract with a Hanoverian lieutenant-colonel for raising four thousand recruits in Germany, granting for the purpose the use of his electoral dominions and the "indispensably necessary assistance and support of his field marshal."

In those days, no reciprocal comity restrained the princes from tempting each other's soldiers to desert; and a larger bounty, higher wages, and the undefined prospect of spoils in the "El Dorado" of America, attracted vagabond veterans of former wars to the British standard. The kings of France had long been accustomed, with the consent of the cantons, to raise troops in Switzerland, and had used the permission so freely that the total sum of their Swiss levies in three hundred years was computed at more than a million of men. The German diet had prohibited the system; the

court of Vienna wrote to the free cities and several of the states of the empire, that "Great Britain had no more connection with the empire than Russia or Spain, neither of which powers was permitted to recruit within its limits," and ordered its ministers to obstruct the recruiting officers in the British service; yet the king's contractor was very soon ready with a small instalment of a hundred and fifty men, and promised rapid success when the enterprise should get a little better into train. Moreover, the prince bishop of Liége and the elector of Cologne consented to shut their eyes to the presence of English agents, who also had recruiting stations in Neuwied and at Frankfort. The undertaking was prohibited by the laws of nations and of the empire; the British ministers therefore instructed their diplomatic representative at the small courts to give all possible aid to the execution of the service, but not officially to implicate their government. In this way, levies were obtained to fill up British regiments, though in less numbers than had been hoped for.

But the wants of the ministry required subsidiary troops from German princes. It was hoped that the Duke of Brunswick could supply at least three thousand, and the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel five thousand: in November, 1775, Suffolk repeated to Colonel Faucitt, his agent, the instructions before given to the British minister in Russia: "Your point is to get as many men as you can; it will be much to your credit to procure the most moderate terms, though expense is not so much the object in the present emergency as in ordinary cases. Great activity is necessary, as the king is extremely anxious."

More than one little prince hurried to offer troops. "I shall regard it as a favor," wrote the prince of Waldeck, "if the king will accept a regiment of six hundred men, composed of officers and soldiers, who, like their prince, will certainly demand nothing better than to find an opportunity of sacrificing themselves for his majesty." The offer was eagerly closed with.

Charles, the reigning duke of Brunswick, was at that time about sixty-three. During the forty years of his rule,

the spendthrift had squandered a loan of twelve millions of thalers, beside millions of his revenue, on his Italian opera, his corps of French dancers, his theatre, journeys, mistresses, and gaming, his experiments in alchemy, but most of all on his little army. Within the last three years a new prime minister had improved the condition of his finances; at the same time, Prince Ferdinand, the heir apparent, had been admitted as co-regent. In 1764, Ferdinand had married Augusta, a sister of George III., receiving with her a dowry of eighty thousand pounds, besides an annuity of eight thousand more, chargeable on the revenues of Ireland and Hanover. His governor had been indulgent to the vices of his youth. From Frederic of Prussia, his uncle, he adopted not disinterested nationality, but skepticism, with which he mixed up enough of philanthropic sentiment to pass for a liberal and humane free thinker. Stately in his appearance, a student of attitudes before the glass, he was profuse of bows and affectedly polite. His eyes were a most beautiful blue, and their expression friendly and winning. He himself and those about him professed the strongest sense of the omnipotence of legitimate princes; he loved to rule, and required obedience. He had courage, and just too much ability to be called insignificant; it was his pride to do his day's work properly; and he introduced economy into the public administration. Indifferent to his English wife, he kept a succession of mistresses from the second year of his marriage to his death. Devoted to sensual pleasure, yet indefatigable in labor, neither prodigal, nor despotic, nor ambitious, his great defect was that he had no heart, so that he was not capable of gratitude or love, nor true to his word, nor fixed in his principles, nor possessed of discernment of military worth. He was a good secondary officer, priggishly exact in the mechanism of a regiment, but unfit to plan a campaign or lead an army.

Faucitt, on the evening of his arrival, sought a conference with the hereditary prince, to whom he bore a special letter from the king. Ferdinand gave unreservedly his most cordial approbation to the British proposal, and promised his

interposition with his father in its favor. The reigning duke, although he regretted to part with troops which were the pride and amusement of his decrepit old age, in the distressed state of his finances, gave his concurrence with all imaginable facility.

It remained for Faucitt to chaffer with Feronce, the Brunswick minister, on the price of the troops, to the number of four thousand infantry and three hundred light dragoons. These last were not wanted, but Faucitt accepted them, "rather than appear difficult." Sixty German dollars for each man was demanded as levy money; but thirty crowns banco, or about thirty-four and a half of our dollars, was agreed upon. Every soldier who should be killed was to be paid for at the rate of the levy money; and three wounded were to be reckoned as one killed. Brunswick demanded that the English pay should begin three months before the march of the troops, but assented to the advance of only two months' pay. The annual subsidy after wrangling for two days was settled at sixty-four thousand five hundred German crowns from the date of the signature of the treaty, and twice that sum for two years after the return of the troops.

Riedesel, a colonel in the duke's service, was selected for the command, with the rank of a major-general. He was a man of honor and activity; fond of his profession, of which he had spared no pains to make himself master.

During the war, Brunswick furnished altogether five thousand seven hundred and twenty-three mercenaries; a number equal to more than one sixth of the able-bodied men in the principality. Two battalions were a regular force; the rest were eked out by old men, raw boys, and kidnapped recruits.

It is just to inquire if conduct like that of Ferdinand was followed by a happy life and an honorable death. His eldest son died two years before him; two others of his sons were idiotic and blind; his eldest daughter was married to the brutal prince of Würtemberg, and perished in 1788. The same intimate relations which led George III. to begin the purchase of mercenary troops with his brother-in-law

made him select Ferdinand's younger daughter, Caroline, — a woman brought up in the lewd atmosphere of her father's palace, accustomed to the company of his mistresses, and environed by licentiousness from her childhood, — to become, at twenty-seven, the wife of the Prince of Wales, and eventually a queen of Great Britain. As to the prince himself, in a battle where his incompetence as a commander assisted to bring upon Prussia a most disastrous defeat, his eyes were shot away; a fugitive, deserted by mistress and friends, he refused to take food, and so died.

From Brunswick Faucitt hurried to Cassel, where his coming was expected by one who knew well the strait to which the British ministry was reduced. The people of Hesse preserve the hardy and warlike character of its ancestral tribe, which the Romans could never vanquish. It was still a nation of soldiers, whose valor had been proved in all the battle-fields of Europe. In the former century, the republic of Venice had employed them against the Turks, and they had taken part in the siege of Athens.

The landgrave, Frederic II., was about fifty-six, and had ruled for nearly sixteen years. He had been carefully educated; but his nature was brutish and obstinate. The wife of his youth, a daughter of George II., the gentlest of her race, was forced to fly from his inhumanity to his own father for protection. At the age of fifty-three, he married again, but lived with his second consort on no better terms than with his first.

The landgrave had been scrupulously educated in the Reformed Church, of which the house of Hesse had ever regarded itself a bulwark; but he piqued himself on having disburdened his mind of the prejudices of the vulgar, courted Voltaire's esteem by doubting various narratives in the Bible, and scoffed alike at the Old Testament and the New. In his view, Calvinism had died out even in Geneva; and Luther, though commendable for having loved wine and women, was but an ordinary man; he therefore turned Catholic in 1749, from dislike to the plebeian simplicity of the established worship of his people. He had learned to favor toleration, to abolish the use of torture, and to make

capital punishments exceedingly rare; at the same time, he was the coarse representative of the worst licentiousness of his age; fond of splendor and luxurious living, parading his vices publicly with shameless indecorum. Having no nationality, he sought to introduce French modes of life; had his opera, ballet-dancers, masquerades during the carnival, his French playhouse, a cast-off French coquette for his principal mistress, a French superintendent of theatres for his librarian. But nothing could be less like France than his court; life in Cassel was spiritless; "nobody here reads," said Forster; "the different ranks are stiffly separated," said the historian Müller. Birth or wealth alone had influence: merit could not command respect, nor talent hope for fostering care.

To this man Faucitt delivered a letter from the British king. General Schlieffen, the minister with whom he was to conduct the negotiation, prepared him to acquiesce unconditionally in every demand, by dwelling on the hazard of finding the landgrave in an unfavorable turn of mind, and describing him "as most exceedingly whimsical and uncertain in his humors and disposition;" at the same time, he promised twelve thousand foot soldiers for service in America.

The prince, who would not confess that he sold his subjects from avarice, assumed a strong desire to force the rebels back to their duty, and grew so warm and so sanguine that he professed himself inclined, in the cause of monarchy, to head his troops in person. This zeal augured immoderate exactions: his first extortion was a sum of more than forty thousand pounds for hospital disbursements during the last war. The demand was scandalous; the account had been liquidated, paid, and closed; but the distress of the government compelled a reconsideration of the claim, and the tribute was enforced.

In conducting the bargain, the landgrave insisted on adhering to the beaten track of former conventions; and his predilection for precedents was not confined to mere formalities, but in every essential point was attended with anxiety to collect and accumulate in the new treaty every

favorable stipulation that had separately found its way into any of the old ones. The levy money appeared to be the same that was agreed upon with Brunswick; but, as it was to be paid for the officers as well as for the men, the Hessian contract had an advantage of twenty per cent.

The master stroke of Schlieffen was the settlement of the subsidy. In no former convention had that condition extended over a less period than four years; the British minister objected to a demand for six, believing that one campaign would terminate the war; the Hessian therefore, with seeming moderation, accepted a double subsidy, to be paid from the signature of the treaty to its expiration. Precedents were also found for stipulating that the subsidy should be paid not as by the treaty with Brunswick in German crowns, but in crowns banco, which made a further considerable gain to the landgrave; and, as the engagement actually continued in force for about ten years, it proved more onerous than any which England had ever before negotiated, affording a clear profit to the landgrave on this item alone of five millions of our dollars.

The taxes paid by the Hessians were sufficient to defray the pay-rolls and all the expenses of the Hessian army; these taxes it had not been the custom to reduce; but, on the present occasion, the landgrave, to give his faithful subjects proof of his paternal inclinations, most graciously suspended, from July to the return of his troops, one half of the ordinary contribution to his military chest. The other half was rigorously exacted.

It was stipulated that the British pay, which was higher than the Hessian, should be paid into the treasury of Hesse; and this afforded great opportunities for peculation. The pay-rolls, after the first month, invariably included more persons than were in the service; with Brunswick, the price to be paid for the killed and wounded was fixed; the landgrave introduced no such covenant, and was left with the right to exact full pay for every man who had ever once been mustered into the British service, whether active or dead.

The British minister urged that the Hessian soldiers should

be allowed as ample and extensive enjoyment of their pay as the British; "I dare not agree to any stipulation on this head," answered Schlieffen, "for fear of giving offence to the landgrave." "They are my fellow-soldiers," said the landgrave; "and do I not mean to treat them well?"

The sick and the wounded of the Brunswick troops were to be taken care of in British hospitals; for the Hessians, the landgrave claimed the benefit of providing a hospital of his own.

The British ministers wished to clothe the mercenary troops in British manufactures; but the landgrave would not allow this branch of his profits to be impaired.

It had been thought in England that the landgrave could furnish no more than five thousand foot; but the price was so high that, after contracting for twelve thousand, he further bargained to supply four hundred Hessian yagers, armed with rifled guns; and then three hundred dismounted dragoons; and then three corps of artillery; taking care for every addition to make a corresponding increase in the double subsidy.

To escape impressment, his subjects fled into Hanover; King George, who was elector of Hanover, was therefore called upon "to discourage the elopement of Hessian subjects into that country, when the demand for men to enable the landgrave to fulfil his engagement with Great Britain was so pressing."

It was thought essential to march the troops through the electorate to their place of embarkation; for it was not doubted, "if the Hessians were to march along the left bank of the Weser, through the territories of Prussia and perhaps half a score of petty princes, one half of them would be lost on the way by desertion." Yet very many went willingly, having been made to believe that America was the land of golden spoils, where they would have free license to plunder and indulge their passions.

Every point in dispute having been yielded to the categorical demands of the landgrave, the treaty was signed on the thirty-first day of January. This would have seemed definitive; but, as the payment of the double subsidy was

to begin from the day of the signature of the treaty, the landgrave put back the date of the instrument to January the fifteenth.

His troops were among the best in Europe; their chief commander was Lieutenant-general Heister, a brave old man of nearly sixty, cheerful in disposition, crippled with wounds, of a good understanding, but without genius for war; tenacious of authority, but good-natured, bluntly honest, and upright. Next him stood Lieutenant-general Knyphausen, remarkable for taciturnity and reserve; one of the best officers in the landgrave's service, with a kindly nature and the accomplishments of a man of honor.

The four major-generals were all of moderate capacities and skill. Of the colonels, every one praised Donop, who commanded the four battalions of grenadiers and the yagers; Rall, Minigerode, Wurmb, and Loos, and four or five others, had served with distinction.

The excuse of the British ministry for yielding to all the exactions of the landgrave was their eagerness to obtain the troops early in February. "Delay," wrote Suffolk, "will mar the expected advantage." The landgrave freely consented that thirteen battalions should be prepared to march on the fifteenth of February; but, though tardiness involved the loss of a campaign, the system of corruption was then so thoroughly a part of the administration that the admiralty had to bide the time of the contractors, who did not provide transports enough at the time appointed, and even in March could not tell when they would all be ready. The first detachment from Brunswick did not sail from England till the fourth of April, and Riedesel was at Quebec before the first division of the Hessians cleared the British channel.

The transports were very badly fitted up; the bedding furnished by the contractors was infamously scanty, their thin pillows being seven inches by five at most, and mattress, pillow, blanket, and rug, all together, hardly weighing seven pounds. The clothing of the Brunswick troops was old, and only patched up for the present; "the person who executed the commission" for purchasing shoes for them in

England sent "fine thin dancing pumps," and of these the greatest number were too small for use.

The treaty with the hereditary prince of Hesse-Cassel, who was the ruler over Hanau, met with no obstacle. His eagerness and zeal were not to be described; he went in person round the different bailiwicks to choose recruits; and he accompanied his regiment as far as Frankfort on their way to Helvoetsluys. Conscious of the merit of all this devotion, he pressed for an additional special subsidy. Professing ostensibly to give a positive refusal, lest he should wake up similar claims, Suffolk granted the demand, under an injunction of the most absolute secrecy. The prince's minister reiterated in his name a written promise of preserving a discretion without bounds. "My attachment and most humble respect to the best of kings, my generous protector and magnanimous support, removes all idea of interest in me," wrote the prince himself. He wished that all the officers and soldiers of his regiment might be animated with a zeal like his own; and he addressed Suffolk in these words: "May the end they shall fight for answer to the king's upper contentment, and your laudable endeavors, my lord, be granted by the most happiest issue." Suffolk, in reply, congratulated him on his hereditary knowledge of the English.

It was doubted if the prince of Waldeck could make good his offers, for there were already three Waldeck regiments in the service of the Netherlands; the states of the overtasked principality had complained of the loss of its subjects; but the prince vowed so warm an attachment to the "incomparable monarch" of Britain, that on the twentieth of April the treaty with him was closed. He had no way of getting troops except by force, or authority, or deceit; but the village ministers from the pulpit encouraged the enlistment; and it was thought that an effective regiment would soon be ready, provided in the formation of it "he should not be too tender of his own subjects." The conscripts were quieted by promises of great wealth; but, to prevent their deserting, a corps of mounted yagers escorted them to Beverungen.

The half-crazed ruling prince of the house of Anhalt Zerbst, brother to the empress of Russia, living very rarely within his own dominions, keeping up sixteen recruiting stations outside of them, in a letter which, from "the confusion in his style and in his expressions, could not be translated," offered a regiment of six hundred and twenty-seven men. He wrote directly to George III., but his letter was so strange that it was pronounced not fit to be delivered. During that year nothing came of his proposal.

The elector of Bavaria made an overture to Elliot, the British minister at Ratisbon; but it was not heeded, for "his troops were among the worst in Germany;" and, besides, "the court was so sold to Austria and France that the prince himself warned the British diplomatist against speaking of the proposal to his own ministers."

On the last day of February, the treaties with Brunswick and Hesse were considered in the house of commons. Lord North said: "The troops are wanted; the terms on which they are procured are less than we could have expected; the force will enable us to compel America to submission, perhaps without further effusion of blood." He was answered by Lord John Cavendish: "The measure disgraces Britain, humiliates the king, and by its extravagance impoverishes the country." "Our business will be effected within the year," replied Cornwall; "so that the troops are all had on lower terms than ever before." Lord Irnham took a broader view: "The landgrave of Hesse and the duke of Brunswick render Germany vile and dishonored in the eyes of all Europe, as a nursery of men for those who have most money. Princes who thus sell their subjects, to be sacrificed in destructive wars, commit the additional crime of making them destroy much better and nobler beings than themselves. The landgrave of Hesse has his prototype in Sancho Panza, who said that, if he were a prince, he should wish all his subjects to be blackamoors, so that he could turn them into ready money by selling them." A warning voice was raised by Hartley: "You set the American congress the example of applying

to foreign powers; when they intervene, the possibility of reconciliation is totally cut off." The third son of the Earl of Bute spoke for sanguinary measures, and contrasted the unrivalled credit of England with the uncurrent paper of America. "The measures of ministers," said James Luttrell, who had served in America, "are death-warrants to thousands of British subjects, not steps towards regaining the colonies." George Grenville, afterwards Marquis of Buckingham, stated this as the alternative: "Shall we abandon America, or shall we recover our sovereignty over that country? We had better make one effort more." Lord George Germain defended the treaties on the ground of necessity; this Lord Barrington confirmed, for British recruits could not be procured on any terms, and the bargain was the best that could be made. The ministers were sustained by their usual majority.

Five days later, they were equally well supported in the house of lords; but not without a rebuke from the Duke of Cumberland, one of the king's brothers, who said: "I have constantly opposed these oppressive measures; I heartily concur in reprobating the conduct of the ministers; my lords, I lament to see Brunswickers, who once to their great honor were employed in the defence of the liberties of the subject, now sent to subjugate his constitutional liberties in another part of this vast empire."

The whole number of men furnished in the war by Brunswick was equal to one twenty-seventh part of its collective population; by the landgrave of Hesse, to one out of every twenty of his subjects, or one in four of the able-bodied men; a proportionate conscription in 1776 would have shipped to America from England and Wales alone an army of more than four hundred thousand. Soldiers were impressed from the plough, the workshop, the highway; no man was safe from the inferior agents of the princes, who kidnapped without scruple. Almost every family in Hesse mourned for one of its members; light-hearted joyousness was not to be found among its peasantry; most of the farm work was thrown upon women, whose large hands and feet, lustreless eye, and embrowned and yellowing skin

showed that the beauty of the race suffered for a generation from the avarice of their prince.

In a letter to Voltaire, the landgrave, announcing his contribution of troops, expressed his zeal to learn "the difficult principles of the art of governing men, and of making them perceive that all which their ruler does is for their special good." He wrote also a catechism for princes, in which Voltaire professed to find traces of a pupil of the king of Prussia. "Do not attribute his education to me," answered the great Frederic; "were he a graduate of my school, he would never have turned Catholic, and would never have sold his subjects to the English as they drive cattle to the shambles. He a preceptor of sovereigns! The sordid passion for gain is the only motive of his vile procedure."

From avarice he sold the flesh of his own people while they were yet alive, depriving many of existence and himself of honor. In an empire which spoke the language of Luther, where Kant by profound analysis was compelling skepticism itself to bear witness to the eternal law of duty, where Lessing inculcated faith in an ever improving education of the race, the land of free cities and free thought, where the heart of the best palpitated with hope for the American cause, the landgrave forced the energies of his state to act against that liberty which was the child of the German forests, and the moral life of the Germanic nation. And did judgment slumber? Were the eyes of the Most High turned elsewhere? Or, in the abyss of the divine counsels, was some great benefit in preparation for lands all so full of tyrants, though beyond the discernment of the sordid princes, whose crimes were to promote the brotherhood of nations?

CHAPTER LVIII.

BRITAIN BEATS UP FOR RECRUITS IN AMERICA.

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, 1776.

THE disbanded Highlanders, who had settled in the valley of the Mohawk, were reported as disposed to rally once more under the king's standard; to prevent their rising, Schuyler, at Albany, in January, 1776, following the orders of the general congress, called out seven hundred of the New York militia, and, sending an envoy in advance to quiet the Mohawks of the Lower Castle, marched upon Johnstown, in what was then Tryon county. He was joined on the way by Herkimer and the militia of that district, till his force numbered more than two thousand, and easily overpowered Sir John Johnson and his party. The Indians, as mediators, entreated the personal liberty of Johnson; and Schuyler, whose ingenuous mind would not harbor the thought that a man of rank could break his word of honor, was contented with exacting his parole to preserve neutrality, and confine himself within carefully prescribed bounds. The quantity of military stores that he delivered up was inconsiderable; on the twentieth, at noon, between two and three hundred Highlanders marched to the front of the invading force, and grounded their arms. In the two following days, Herkimer completed the disarmament of the disaffected, and secured six Highlanders as hostages for the peaceable conduct of the rest. Schuyler and his party were rewarded by the approbation of congress.

1776. Jan.

After the death of Montgomery, the active command in Canada was reserved for Schuyler, to whom it properly

belonged. His want of vigorous health and the irksomeness of controlling the men of Connecticut had inclined him to leave the army; the reverses suffered within his own district now placed him in a painful dilemma: he must either risk the reproach of resigning at the news of disasters, or retain his commission, and in the division of his department leave to another the post of difficulty and danger. Unwilling at such a moment to retire, yet too "weak and indisposed" to undertake the campaign in Canada, he continued as before to render auxiliary services. The general congress acquiesced in his decision, and invited Washington to propose in his stead an officer to conduct the perilous warfare on the St. Lawrence. 1776. Jan.

The position of New York offered great advantage to the friends of the royal government; for the British men-of-war were masters of the bay, the harbor, the East River, and Hudson River below the Highlands; neither Staten Island nor Long Island could prevent the landing of British troops; the possession of Long Island would give the command of Manhattan Island, which had not as yet accumulated materials for defence. Queen's county, where a large part of the population was of Dutch descent, and where among the English there were churchmen and very many Quakers, by a vote of more than three to one refused to send delegates to the provincial congress; and it was only after long delays that Richmond county made an election. In West Chester, Morris of Morrisania and Van Cortlandt were unwavering in their patriotism; but Philipse and the Delanceys, who owned vast tracts of land in the county, influenced their tenants in favor of the king, with so much effect that the inhabitants were nearly equally divided. In the city, the popular movement was irresistible; but a large part of the wealthy merchants were opposed in any event to a separation from Britain. The colony of New York, guided by men of high ability, courage, and purity, had pursued a system of moderation, at first from a desire to avoid a revolution, if it could be done without a surrender of American rights; and, when that hope failed, with the purpose of making it manifest to all that independence was adopted

from necessity. In this manner only could they stand acquitted of the accusation of needlessly provoking war, and unite in the impending struggle the large majority of the people. It was also obviously wise to delay the outbreak of hostilities till warlike stores could be imported, and the women and children of a populous city be removed from danger. This system was maintained alike by the prudent and the bold; by Livingston and Jay, by John Morin Scott and Macdougall. A sort of truce was permitted; the British men-of-war were not fired upon; and in return the commerce of the port was not harassed, so that vessels laden with provisions, to purchase powder in St. Eustatius, went and came without question. A small party in the city, insignificant in numbers and in weight of character, clamored at this forbearance, and would have risked ultimate success for the momentary gratification of passion. Of these, the most active was Isaac Sears, who, known as a fearless Son of Liberty, deserved a high appointment in the American navy, for which his course of life had fitted him. Impatient at being overlooked, and naturally inclined to precipitate counsels, he left the city for Connecticut, and returned with a party of mounted volunteers from that colony, who rode into the city and rifled the printing-house of the tory Rivington. The committee of New York and its convention censured the riot, as an infringement of the liberty of the press, and a dangerous example to their enemies; as the unsolicited intermeddling of New England men in New York affairs without concert and even without warning, it was resented by the Dutch, and by all moderate men.

1776. Jan.

Disowned and censured by every branch of the popular representation of New York, Sears repaired to the camp in Cambridge, and there found a patron in Lee.

Meantime, the New York provincial convention, in spite of many obstacles and delays, met in sufficient numbers to transact business, and explained to the general congress the expediency of delaying the last appeal till better preparations could be made. In concert with that body, and in perfect harmony with the New York committee of safety,

the disaffected in Long Island, that is, all the men in Queen's county who voted against sending deputies to the New York congress, were disarmed by a party of Jersey minute men, aided by Lord Stirling's battalion.

Early in January, the commander in chief ascertained that Clinton was about to embark from Boston, with troops, on a southern expedition, of which New York was believed to be the object; at the same time, Lee, whose claim to "the character of a military genius and the officer of experience" had not yet been disallowed, desired to be detached from the army, that he might exercise a separate command in New York; and he urged the measure upon Washington, whether it exceeded the powers granted him or not. After consulting John Adams, who was then with the provincial convention at Watertown, and who pronounced the plan to be practicable, expedient, and clearly authorized, Washington, uninformed of the measures already adopted, gave his consent to the request of Lee, charging him to "keep always in view the declared intention of congress," and to communicate with the New York committee of safety, to whom he wrote, soliciting their co-operation.

As soon as he arrived in Connecticut, Lee, who had never commanded so much as one regiment before he entered the American army, persuaded the governor and council of Connecticut to place two regiments under him. 1776. Jan. Following his constant maxim, he usurped authority, and appointed Sears assistant adjutant-general with the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

The tidings that Lee, with nearly fifteen hundred men of Connecticut, was advancing upon New York, without so much as intimating his design to its committee or its inhabitants, offended the province. Washington scrupulously respected the civil authority of each colony, as well as of the continental congress; Lee scoffed at the thought of being rigidly bound by either; and his movement seemed to have for its end to coerce rather than to defend New York. When its committee of safety, who were ready at the proper hour to devote their city as a sacrifice to the cause of America, wrote to request that the troops of Connecticut might

not pass the border till the purpose of their coming should be explained, Lee made a jest of the letter.

1776. Feb. Both parties appealed to the general congress, to whose committee that of New York cheerfully submitted.

On the fourth, Lee entered the city of New York, just two hours after Clinton anchored in its harbor. Troops from the Jerseys and from Connecticut at the same time marched into town, while a transport, with two companies of British infantry and some Highlanders, came up to the docks. In the general consternation, women and children were removed from the city, which for seven years to come was to know no peace; all the wagons that could be found were employed in transporting valuable effects; the flight in winter was attended with peculiar danger and distress; the opulent knew not where to find shelter; the poor, thrown upon the cold hands of exhausted charity in the interior towns and the Jerseys, suffered from complicated wants. Under the harmonizing influence of the continental committee, Lee and the New York committee held friendly conferences; the whole people showed a wonderful alacrity; and men and boys of all ages toiled with zeal to raise works of defence. To control the Sound, a fortification was raised at Hellgate; on a height west of Trinity church, a battery was erected fronting the North River; that part of the old fort which faced Broadway was torn down; Lee and Lord Stirling, crossing to Long Island, marked out the ground for an intrenched camp, extending from the Wallabout to Gowanus Bay; the connection between Long Island and New York was secured by a battery of forty guns at the foot of Wall Street, and another of twenty guns a little further to the south. It was fondly hoped that the proposed fortifications would prove impregnable; the ships-of-war, without firing a gun, removed to the bay; and this state of peace and of confidence confirmed the preconceived notion of Lee's superior ability. The charm of exercising a separate command wrought a change in his caprices; and he, who two months before had scorned the Americans as unworthy to aspire after independence, now repudiated the

thought of reconciliation with Britain, unless "the whole ministry should be condignly punished, and the king beheaded or dethroned."

Clinton had but touched at New York on his way to the Carolinas. Both parties wished to delay extreme measures; he pledged his honor that for the present no more British troops were coming, and soon went away to carry out his expedition. The noisy zeal and seeming success of Lee concentred upon him public confidence. "Canada," said Washington, "will be a fine field for the exertion of your admirable talents, but your presence will be as necessary in New York." In like manner, Franklin wrote: "I am glad you are come to New York; but I also wish you could be in Canada;" and on the nineteenth the congress destined him to "that most arduous service." John Adams, who had counselled his expedition to New York, wrote to him complacently "that a luckier or a happier one had never been projected;" and added: "We want you at New York; we want you at Cambridge; we want you in Virginia; but Canada seems of more importance, and therefore you are sent there. I wish you the laurels of Wolfe and Montgomery, with a happier fate." "When I leave this place," so he wrote to Washington, in his elation, the "provincial congress and inhabitants will relapse into their hysterics; the men-of-war will return to their wharfs, and the first regiments from England will take quiet possession of the town." Those about him chimed in with his revilings. "Things will never go well," said Waterbury, "unless the city of New York is crushed down by the Connecticut people;" and Sears set no bounds to his contumelious abuse of its committee and its convention.

On the first of March, after a warm contest among the delegates of various colonies, each wishing to have him where they had most at stake, on the motion of Edward Rutledge, Lee was invested with the command of the continental forces south of the Potomac. "As a Virginian, I rejoice at the change," wrote Washington; who had, however, already discovered that the officer so much courted was both "violent and fickle." On the seventh he

1776. Mar. 1.

left New York, but not without one last indulgence of his turbulent temper. The continental congress had instructed him to put the city in the best possible state of defence; and this he interpreted as a grant of unlimited authority. He therefore arrested men at discretion, and deputed power to Sears to offer a prescribed test oath to a registered number of suspected persons, and, if they refused it, to send them to Connecticut as irreclaimable enemies. To the rebuke of the New York convention, he answered: "When the enemy is at our door, forms must be dispensed with;" and, on the eve of his departure, he gave Ward, of Connecticut, the sweeping order "to secure the whole body of professed tories on Long Island." These arbitrary orders were resented by the New York delegates as "a high encroachment upon the rights of the representatives of a free people," and were condemned and reversed by congress.

1776. Jan. The expedition to the Carolinas never met the approval of Howe, who would have had the southern governors avoid all disputes, till New York should be recovered; but they vied with each other in clamors for support and in promises of the great number of loyalists they could bring into the field, and were eagerly listened to by Germain. When Lord Dunmore learned from Clinton that Cape Fear River was the place appointed for the meeting of the seven regiments from Ireland, he broke out into angry complaints that no heed had been paid to his representations, his sufferings, and his efforts; that Virginia, "the first on the continent for riches, power, and extent," was neglected, and the preference given to "a poor, insignificant colony," where there were no pilots, nor a harbor that could admit half the fleet, and where the army, should it land, must wade for many miles through a sandy pine barren, before it could reach the inhabited part of the country.

Martin, who had good reason to expect the arrival of the armament in January or early in February, was in haste to see around him the loyalists of his province in arms, and he prepared a proclamation which was to beat down all opposition. "His unwearied, persevering agent," Alexan-

der Maclean, after a careful computation of the numbers that would flock to the king's standard from the interior, brought written assurances from the principal persons to whom he had been directed to apply, that between two and three thousand men, of whom about half were well armed, would take the field at the governor's summons. Under this encouragement, a commission was made out on the tenth of January, authorizing Allan Macdonald of Kingsborough, and eight other Scots of Cumberland and Anson, and seventeen persons who resided in a belt of counties in middle Carolina and in Rowan, to raise and array all the king's loyal subjects, and to march with them in a body to Brunswick by the fifteenth of February. Donald Macdonald, then in his sixty-fifth year, was to command the army; next him in rank came Donald Macleod.

A meeting of all the newly commissioned officers was summoned for the fifth of February at Cross Creek, or, as it is now called, Fayetteville. At the appointed time all the Scots appeared, and four only of the rest. The Scots, who promised no more than seven hundred men, advised to await the arrival of the British troops; the other royalists, who boasted that they could array five thousand, of whom five hundred were already imbodied, prevailed in their demand for an immediate rising. But the former, whose past conflicts were ennobled by their courage and fidelity, were sure to keep their word, and, from a blind instinct of kindred, to take up arms for a cause in which their traditions and their affections had no part; while many of the latter shrunk from danger to hiding-places in swamps and forests. 1776. Feb.

Employing a few days to collect his army, which was composed chiefly of Highlanders and remnants of the old regulators, Macdonald, on the eighteenth, began his march for Wilmington, and at evening encamped his army on the Cape Fear River, four miles below Cross Creek. On that same day, Moore, who, at the first menace of danger, took the field at the head of his regiment, and lay in an intrenched camp at Rockfish, was joined by Lillington with one hundred and fifty minute men from Wilmington, by

Kenon with two hundred of the Duplin militia, and by Ashe with about a hundred volunteer independent rangers; so that his number was increased to eleven hundred.

On the nineteenth, Donald Macdonald sent Martin's proclamation into the American camp, calling on Moore and his troops to join the king's standard, or to be considered as enemies. Moore, in his instant reply, besought Macdonald not to array the deluded people under his command against men who were resolved to hazard every thing in defence of the liberties of mankind. The latter promptly rejoined: "As a soldier in his majesty's service, it is my duty to conquer, if I cannot reclaim, all those who may be hardy enough to take up arms against the best of masters;" and he paraded his party with a view to assail Moore in the coming night. But the camp at Rockfish was too strong to be attempted; and, at the bare suspicion of such a project, two companies of Cotton's loyalist corps ran off with their arms.

1776. Feb.

Knowing that Caswell, at the head of the minute men of Newbern, and others to the number of six or eight hundred, were marching through Duplin county to effect a junction with Moore, Macdonald became aware of his extreme danger of being surrounded; cut off from the direct road along the Cape Fear, he resolved by celerity of movement, and crossing rivers at unexpected places, to disengage himself from the larger force at Rockfish, and encounter the party with Caswell alone. Before moving, he urged his men to fidelity, expressed bitter scorn of "the base cravens who had deserted the night before," and continued: "If any amongst you is so faint-hearted as not to serve with the resolution of conquering or dying, this is the time for such to declare themselves." The speech was answered by a general huzza for the king; but from Cotton's corps about twenty men laid down their arms. The corps then proceeded to Fayetteville, crossed the Cape Fear by night, sunk their boats, and sent a party fifteen miles in advance to secure the bridge over South River. This the main body passed on the twenty-first, and took the direct route to Wilmington. On the day on which they effected the passage,

Moore detached Lillington and Ashe to re-enforce Caswell, or, if that could not be effected, to occupy Moore's Creek bridge.

On the following day, the Scots and regulators drew near to Caswell, who perceived their purpose, and changed his own course, the more effectually to intercept their march. On the twenty-third, they thought to overtake him, and were arrayed in the order of battle; eighty able-bodied Highlanders, armed with broadswords, forming the centre of the army. Caswell was already posted at Corbett's Ferry, and could not be reached for want of boats; but, at a point six miles higher up the Black River, a negro succeeded in raising a broad shallow boat; and while Maclean and Fraser, with a few men, a drum, and a pipe, were left to amuse Caswell, the main body of the loyalists crossed Black River near what is now Newkirk Bridge. 1776. Feb.

On the twenty-fifth, Lillington, who had not as yet been able to join Caswell, took post with his small party on the east side of the bridge over Moore's Creek. On the afternoon of the twenty-sixth, Caswell reached its west side, and, raising a small breastwork and destroying a part of the bridge, awaited the enemy, who on that day advanced within six miles of him. A messenger from the loyalists, sent to his camp under the pretext of summoning him to return to his allegiance, brought back word that he had halted upon the same side of the river with themselves, and could be attacked with advantage; but the Carolina commander had no sooner misled his enemy, than, lighting up fires and leaving them burning, he crossed the creek, took off the planks from the bridge, and placed his men behind trees or such slight intrenchments as the night permitted to be thrown up.

The loyalists, expecting an easy victory, unanimously agreed that his camp should be assaulted. His force at that time amounted to a thousand men, consisting of the Newbern minute men, of militia from Craven, Johnson, Dobbs, and Wake counties, and the detachment under Lillington. The army of Macdonald, who was himself confined to his tent by illness, numbered between fifteen and sixteen hun-

dred. At one o'clock in the morning of the twenty-seventh, they began their march; but it cost so much time to cross an intervening morass, that it was within an hour of daylight before they reached the western bank of the creek, where they had expected to find Caswell encamped. They entered the ground in three columns without resistance, for Caswell and all his force had taken post on the opposite side. The Scots were now within less than twenty miles of Wilmington; orders were directly given to reduce the columns, and for the sake of concealment to form the line of battle within the verge of the wood; the rallying cry was, "King George and broadswords!" the signal for the attack, three cheers, the drum to beat and the pipes to play. It was still dark; Macleod, who led the van of about forty, was challenged at the bridge by the Carolina sentinels, asking: "Who goes there?" He answered: "A friend." "A friend to whom?" "To the king." Macleod then challenged them in Gaelic, thinking they might be some of his own party who had crossed the bridge; receiving no answer, he fired his own piece, and ordered those with him to fire. Of the bridge that separated the Scots and the Carolinians, nothing had been left but the two logs, which had served as sleepers; only two persons therefore could pass at a time. Macleod and John Campbell rushed forward, and succeeded in getting over; Highlanders who followed with broadswords were shot down on the logs, falling into the deep muddy creek. Macleod, who was greatly esteemed for his valor and his worth, was wounded; he was seen to rise repeatedly from the ground, encouraging his men to come on, till he received twenty-six balls in his body. Campbell also fell. It was impossible to furnish men for the deadly pass, and in a very few minutes the assailants fled in irretrievable despair. The Americans had but three wounded, one only mortally; of their opponents, more than thirty were killed or mortally wounded, most of them while passing the bridge. The routed fugitives could never be rallied; during the following day, the aged Macdonald their general, and others of the chief men, were taken prisoners; amongst the rest, Macdonald of Kings-

1776. Feb.

borough and one of his sons, who were at first confined in Halifax jail, and afterwards transferred to Reading in Pennsylvania. Thirteen wagons, with complete sets of horses, eighteen hundred stand of arms, one hundred and fifty swords, two medicine chests just received from England, a box containing fifteen thousand pounds sterling in gold, fell to the victors; eight or nine hundred common soldiers were taken, disarmed, and dismissed. 1776. Feb.

In less than a fortnight, more than nine thousand four hundred men of North Carolina rose against the enemy; and the coming of Clinton inspired no terror. They knew well the difficulty of moving from the sea into their back country, and almost every man was ready to turn out at an hour's warning. Moore, under orders from the council, disarmed the Highlanders and regulators of the back country, and sent the ringleaders to Halifax jail. Virginia offered assistance, and South Carolina would gladly have contributed relief; but North Carolina had men enough of her own to crush the insurrection and guard against invasion; and, as they marched in triumph through their piny forests, they were persuaded that in their own woods they could win an easy victory over British regulars. The terrors of a fate like that of Norfolk could not dismay the patriots of Wilmington; the people spoke more and more of independence; and the provincial congress, at its impending session, was expected to give an authoritative form to the prevailing desire.

CHAPTER LIX.

BOSTON DELIVERED.

FEBRUARY, MARCH, 1776.

IN February, 1776, the commander in chief of the American army found himself supplied with only money enough to answer claims antecedent to the last day of December; his want of powder, which Congress had strangely lavished on the equipment of a navy, required the most careful concealment. He was compelled to look for the materials of war in every direction; and at one time he had even asked if something could be spared him from the hoped-for acquisitions of Montgomery. Unable to enlist for the year a sufficient number of soldiers to defend his lines, he was obliged to rely for two months on the service of three regiments of militia from Connecticut, one from New Hampshire, and six from Massachusetts; but at the same time, with all the explicitness and force that his experience, his dangers, and his trials could suggest, he set before congress the ruinous imperfections of their military system. To the vast numbers of mercenary troops that were to come over [illegible] to re-enforce his enemy, he could indulge no hope [illegible] any thing better than fleeting bands of undis[illegible]n, ill-clad and poorly armed. In this dark [illegible]wn spirit never drooped, and all observers [illegible]nazing diligence. Though he had in reserve [illegible]lred barrels of powder, yet with swift and [illegible]lication he devoted himself to preparing for [illegible]ich he hoped would break up the "nest" of

1776. Feb.

[illegible] in that town consisted of nearly eight thou[illegible]d file, beside officers and the complements of

the ships-of-war. The young men who held commissions were full of ingenious devices to amuse the common soldiers, and to relieve their own wearisome hours. The Old South meeting-house was turned into a riding-school for the light dragoons; Faneuil Hall became a playhouse, where the officers appeared as actors on the stage; they even attempted balls and planned a masquerade. The winter was mild; so that, though the back bay was frozen over, the channel was open, and provisions were imported in abundance from Ireland and England, from Barbados and Antigua. Thus the time was whiled away in comfortable quarters, without a thought of danger. 1776. Feb.

Dorchester Heights commanded Boston and a large part of the harbor. Ill supplied as Washington was with powder, and having no resource for artillery but in the captures made from the enemy by privateers, and the cannon which had been dragged overland from Lake George, he made arrangements to occupy the position, in the hope to bring the enemy out and force them to offer battle. The council of Massachusetts, at his request, called in five regiments of minute men from the nearest towns, and almost as many more, well armed, came as volunteers. The engineer employed to devise and superintend the works was Rufus Putnam; and the time chosen for their erection was the eve of the anniversary of "the Boston massacre." To harass the enemy and divert attention, a heavy cannonade and bombardment of the town was kept up during the two previous nights. Soon after candle-light on the fourth of March, the firing was renewed with greater vehemence than before, from Cobble Hill, now Somerville, from Lechmere's Point, now East Cambridge, and from a battery in Roxbury, and was returned with such zeal by the British that a continued roar of cannon and mortars was heard from seven o'clock till daylight. As soon as it had begun, Washington proceeded to take possession of the heights of Dorchester. All the requisite dispositions, including the method of baffling an attack, had been deliberately considered, and prepared with consummate skill; every thing was ready; those who had teams in the neighborhood, one and all, were

ready at the call for their assistance. Every man knew his place, his specific task, and the duty of executing it with celerity and silence. Eight hundred went in advance
1776. March. as a guard; one half of them taking post on the height nearest Boston, the other at the easternmost point, opposite the castle. They were followed by carts with intrenching tools, and by the working party of twelve hundred, under the command of Thomas, an officer, whose great merit on this occasion is more to be remembered from the shortness of his career. The ground, for eighteen inches deep, was frozen too hard to yield earth readily for the defences; but the foresight of the chief had amply provided substitutes: a train of more than three hundred carts, easily drawn by oxen over the frozen marshes, brought bundles of screwed hay, to form a cover for Dorchester Neck where it was exposed to a raking fire, and an amazing quantity of gabions and fascines and chandeliers for the redoubts. The drivers, as they goaded on their cattle, suppressed their voices; the westerly wind carried all sound away from the town. Washington perceived that his movement was unobserved; and, as he raised the intrenchments of American independence on the heights of Dorchester, he had a happiness of mind till then unknown to him during the siege. The temperature of that night was the fittest that could be for out-door work; the haze that denotes a softening of the air hung round the base of the ridge; above him, the moon, which that morning had become full, was shining in cloudless lustre; at his side, hundreds of men toiled in stillness with an assiduity that knew nothing of fatigue; the three hundred teams were all at the same time in motion, going backwards and forwards, some three, some four times; beneath him, in the town, lay the British general, indifferent to the ceaseless noise of artillery, never dreaming of an ejectment from his comfortable winter-quarters; his army reposed without special watchfulness or fear; the crowd of ships in the harbor rode motionless except as they turned on their moorings with the tide, unsuspicious of peril; the unarmed inhabitants of Boston, emaciated from want of wholesome food, pining after freedom, as yet little cheered

by hope, trembled lest their own houses should be struck in the tumult, which raged as if heaven and earth were at variance; the people that were left in the villages around, chiefly women and children, driven from their beds by the rattling of their windows and the jar of their houses, could watch from the hill-tops the flight of every shell, and waited for morning with wonder and anxiety. In England, the ministry trusted implicitly the assurances of Howe, that he "was not under the least apprehensions of any attack from the rebels;" the king expected of him that, after wintering in Boston and awaiting re-enforcements, 1776. March. he would, in May or in the first week of June, sail for New York; the courtiers were wishing Boston and all New England sunk to the very bottom of the sea.

At about three in the morning, the working party was relieved; the toil was continued with unremitted energy, so that in one night strong redoubts, secure against grape-shot and musketry, crowned each of the two hills; an abattis constructed of trees, felled in the neighboring orchards, protected the foot of the ridge; the top was surmounted by barrels, filled with earth and stones, which, as the hillsides were steep and bare of trees and bushes, were, in case of an attack, to be rolled down against the assailing columns. "Perhaps there never was so much work done in so short a space of time." After daybreak on the morning of the fifth, the British from Boston beheld with astonishment and dismay the forts which had sprung up in a night. At the discovery, the batteries on both sides ceased to play, and a fearful quiet prevailed. Howe, as he saw the new intrenchments loom in imposing strength, reported that "they must have been the employment of at least twelve thousand men;" and some of his officers acknowledged that their rising as at a word recalled the stories in eastern romances of the invisible agency of fairy hands. The British general found himself surpassed in military skill by officers whom he had pretended to despise. One unexpected combination, concerted with faultless ability and suddenly executed, had in a few hours made his position untenable. His army at that time was well supplied with

provisions from vessels which were constantly coming into port; the Americans, on the contrary, were poorly cared for and poorly paid: the British had abundance of artillery; the Americans had almost no large guns that were serviceable: the British had a profusion of ammunition; the Americans, scarce enough to supply their few cannon for six or eight days; and yet the British had no choice but to dislodge the New England farmers or retreat. Left very much to himself, Howe knew not what to propose. "If they retain possession of the heights," said Admiral Shuldham, "I cannot keep a ship in the harbor." A council of war was called, and it was determined to assault the Americans. Had the British made a vigorous sally against the party at Dorchester, the Americans had floating batteries and boats ready to carry four thousand men into Boston. All day long the hills which commanded a view of the scene were crowded with spectators, who watched the bustle, hurry, and alarm in the town. Twenty-four hundred men were put under the command of Lord Percy to make the attack; but the men shared the general consternation, and remembered Bunker Hill; and Percy showed no heart for an enterprise which Howe confessed to be hazardous. When they were seen to embark, the Americans on the heights, who expected an immediate conflict, kindled with joy. Washington said: "Remember it is the fifth of March, a day never to be forgotten; avenge the death of your brethren;" and the words, as they flew from mouth to mouth, inflamed still more the spirit of his soldiers. But they were doomed to disappointment: the British sallying party, and Percy, who never intended to attempt scaling the heights till after nightfall, were taken in the transports to the castle; in the afternoon a violent storm of wind came up from the south, and about midnight blew with such fury that two or three vessels were driven on shore; rain fell in torrents on the morning of the sixth, so that the movement against the American lines was still further delayed, till it became evident that the attempt must end in the ruin of the British army. "If we had powder," said Washington, "I would give them a dose they would not

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well like." Howe called a second council of war, and its members advised the instant evacuation of Boston.

The orders for evacuation struck the loyal inhabitants, and the royalists who had fled to the town for refuge, with sudden horror and despair. They had confided in the overwhelming power and certain triumph of the British. Some of them were wretched time-servers; others were among the wealthiest and most upright persons in the colony, who, from the sentiment of honor, had left their homes, their fortunes, and even their families, to rally round the standard of their sovereign. Now there was no time even to propose a capitulation for their safety, and the best that could be offered them was a passage in crowded transports from the cherished land of their nativity to the inhospitable shores of Nova Scotia, where they must remain, cut off from all that is dearest and pleasantest in life; condemned to hopeless inferiority in a dreary place of exile; foregoing for the future the pride and joy of healthful activity; exchanging the delight of a love of country for a paralyzing sentiment of useless loyalty; beggared in their sympathies as well as in their fortunes; doomed to depend on the scanty charities, grudgingly doled out, of a monarch for whom they had surrendered every thing, and to find how hard are the steps of great men's houses, at which needy suppliants must ever renew their importunities.

The chief disgrace to the arms of the British was the manifest confession of their inability to protect their friends, who had risked every thing in their cause. Who could now trust their promises? On the eighth, Howe, through the selectmen of Boston, wished to come to an understanding with Washington that the town should be spared, provided he might be suffered to leave it without molestation. The unauthenticated proposal could meet with no reply from the American commander in chief, who drew nearer and nearer to his enemy, and used his artillery sparingly only from want of ammunition. On the night following the ninth, a strong detachment began a fort on Nook Hill, which commanded Boston Neck; but, some of the men having imprudently lighted a fire, the British, 1776. March.

with their cannon and mortars, were able to interrupt the work; and yet, as Washington did not abandon his design, Howe was compelled to hasten his embarkation. In November he had assigned as a reason for not then changing the scene of the war, that he had not transports enough to remove his troops; now he had a larger force and fewer transports. He pretended that he went from Boston for refreshment; but in point of quarters it could be no great refreshment to go from one of the largest towns in America to one of the least, where the troops were in part stived up one upon another on shipboard, in part encamped on ground deeply covered with snow; where the officers and refugees, many of whom were almost penniless, suffered every extortion, and paid sixfold price for the meanest shelter; and where he found less forage and provisions for the king's troops than he left to Washington's army.

1776. March. He gave out that his object was the strengthening of Halifax; but in the preceding December, 1775, he had written home that "that place was in perfect security." He pretended to want an opportunity for exercising his troops in line; and was it for that end that troops, whose destination was New York, were carried six hundred miles out of their way, as though there had been no place for parade but in Nova Scotia? A chosen British army, with select officers, and every military equipment, sent to correct revolted subjects, to chastise a resisting town, to assert the authority of the British parliament, after being imprisoned for many tedious months in the place they were to have punished, found no safety but in flight.

In these very hours, the confidence of the ministry was at its point of culmination; they had heard of the safety of Quebec; they had succeeded in engaging more than twenty thousand German mercenaries and recruits, and they would not hearken to a doubt of speedily crushing the rebellion. On the morning of the fourteenth of March, the British secretary of state listened to a speech from Thayendanegea, otherwise named Joseph Brant, a Mohawk of the Wolf tribe, the chosen chief of the confederacy of the Six Nations, who had crossed the great lake to se

King George; to boast that the savages, "his brethren," had offered the last year to prevent the invasion of Canada; and to complain that the white people had given them no support. "Brother," so the Mohawk chief addressed Germain, "we hope to see these bad children, the New England people, chastised. The Indians have always been ready to assist the king." And Germain replied: "Continue to manifest attachment to the king; and be sure of his majesty's favor." George and his ministers promised themselves important aid from the Iroquois and north-western warriors. "Unconditional submission" was now the watchword; and when on the evening of the same day the Duke of Grafton attempted once more, in the house of lords, to plead for conciliation, the gentle Dartmouth approved sending over "a sufficient force to awe the colonies into submission;" Hillsborough would "listen to no accommodation, short of the acknowledgment of the right of taxation, and the submission of Massachusetts to the law for altering its charter;" and Mansfield, ridiculing the idea of suspending hostilities, laughed moderate counsels away. The ministers pursued their violent policy with such a determination to brave all difficulties that it was evident they followed a superior will. In the laying waste which was proposed, New England was to be spared the least. 1776 March.

The second night after this last effort in the British parliament to restrain the ministry had been defeated, Washington gained possession of Nook Hill, and with it the power of opening the highway from Roxbury to Boston. At the appearance of this work, the British retreated precipitately; the army, about eight thousand in number and more than eleven hundred refugees, began their embarkation at four in the morning; in less than six hours, they were all put on board one hundred and twenty transports; Howe himself, among the last to leave the town, took passage with the admiral in the "Chatham;" before ten they were under way; and the citizens of Boston, from every height and every wharf, could see the fleet sail out of the harbor in a long line, extending from the castle to Nantasket Road.

But where were Thacher, and Mayhew, and Dana, and Molineux, and Quincy, and Gardner, and Warren? Would that they, and all the martyrs of Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill, could have gazed on the receding sails! The flight had been so precipitate that the British general was obliged to remain several days in Nantasket Road, to adjust the ships for the voyage. He was still within sight of the spires of Boston, when a ship-of-war from England hailed him, and gave him despatches applauding the reasons which he had given for not leaving Boston, and deprecating an evacuation as very unadvisable. "The retreat," said Frederic of Prussia, "if not necessary, was exceedingly opportune."

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Troops from Roxbury at once moved into Boston, and others from Cambridge crossed over in boats. Everywhere appeared marks of hurry in the flight of the British; among other stores, they left behind them two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, of which one half were serviceable; twenty-five hundred chaldrons of sea coal; twenty-five thousand bushels of wheat; three thousand bushels of barley and oats; one hundred and fifty horses; bedding and clothing for soldiers. British store-ships, consigned to Boston, and ignorant of the retreat, successively entered the harbor without suspicion, and fell into the hands of the Americans; among them, a ship which, in addition to carbines, bayonets, gun-carriages, and all sorts of tools necessary for artillery, had on board more than seven times as much powder as Washington's whole stock when his last movement was begun.

On the next day, Washington ordered five of his best regiments to march under Heath to New York. On the twentieth, the main body of the army made its entry into Boston, alive with curiosity to behold the town which had been the first object of the war, the immediate cause of hostilities, the place of arms defended by Britain at the cost of more than a million pounds sterling, and which the continent had struggled for so long. Except one meeting-house and a few wooden buildings which had been used for fuel, the houses were left in a good condition. When, two

days later, the restrictions on intercourse with the town were removed, and the exiles and their friends streamed in, all hearts were touched at "witnessing the tender interviews and fond embraces of those who had been long separated." For Washington, crowded welcomes and words of gratitude hung on the faltering tongues of the liberated inhabitants; the selectmen of Boston addressed him in their name: "Next to the Divine Power, we ascribe to your wisdom that this acquisition has been made with so little effusion of human blood;" and in reply he paid a just tribute to their fortitude. 1776. March.

When the quiet of a week had revived ancient usages, Washington attended the Thursday lecture, which had been kept up from the days of Winthrop and Wilson, and all rejoiced with exceeding joy at seeing this New England Zion once more a quiet habitation; they called it "a tabernacle that should never be taken down, of which not one of the stakes should ever be removed, nor one of the cords be broken;" it seemed as if the old century was holding out its hand to the new, and the Puritan ancestry of Massachusetts returning to bless the deliverer of their children.

On the twenty-ninth, the two branches of the legislature addressed him jointly, dwelling on the respect he had ever shown to their civil constitution, as well as on his regard for the lives and health of all under his command. "Go on," said they, "still go on, approved by Heaven, revered by all good men, and dreaded by tyrants; may future generations, in the peaceful enjoyment of that freedom which your sword shall have established, raise the most lasting monuments to the name of Washington." And in his answer he renewed his pledges of "a regard to every provincial institution." When the continental congress, on the motion of John Adams, voted him thanks and a commemorative medal of gold, he modestly transferred their praises to the men of his command, saying: "They were, indeed, at first a band of undisciplined husbandmen; but it is, under God, to their bravery and attention to duty that I am indebted for that success which has procured me the only reward I wish to receive, the affection and esteem of my countrymen."

New England was always true to Washington; the whole mass of her population, to the end of the war and during all his life, heaved and swelled with sympathy for his fortunes; he could not make a sign to her for aid, but her sons rose up to his support; nor utter advice to his country, but they gave it heed.

And never was so great a result obtained at so small a cost of human life. The putting the British army to flight was the first decisive victory of the industrious middling class over the most powerful representative of the mediæval aristocracy; and the whole number of New England men killed in the siege after Washington took the command was less than twenty; the liberation of New England cost all together less than two hundred lives in battle; and
1776. March. the triumphant general, as he looked around, enjoyed the serenest delight, for he saw no mourners among those who greeted his entry after his bloodless victory.

Within the borders of four New England states, permanent peace with self-government was from this time substantially confirmed. And who now, even in the mother land of Massachusetts, does not rejoice at this achievement of a people which so thoroughly represented the middling class of the civilized world? How had they shown patience as well as fortitude! How long they waited, and, when the right moment came, how promptly they rose! How they responded to the inward voice which bade them claim freedom as a birthright, and dread an acquiescence in its loss as a violation of the peace of the soul! Pious and contented, laborious, frugal, and affluent, their rule for the government of conduct was not the pride of chivalry, but the eternal law of duty. Lovers of speculative truth, in an age of materialists they cherished habitually a firm faith in the subjection of all created things to the rule of divine justice, and their distinguishing career was one of action; the vigor of their will was never paralyzed by doubt; they were cheered by confidence in the amelioration of the race, and embraced in their affections the world of mankind. This wonderful people set the example of public schools for all their children, with a degree of perfection which the

mother country yet vainly strives to rival; and in their town governments they revealed the secret of republics. None knew better how to combine the minute discharge of the every-day offices of life with large and ready and generous sympathies; sometimes soaring high and far in daring enterprise, and sometimes following with painful assiduity the humblest calling that promised honest gain; but always the advocates of unselfish love as the true creed of a nation. The men of this century have crowned Bunker Hill, from which their fathers retreated in triumphant hope, with a monument whose summit greets the ray of morning, and catches the eye of the mariner homeward bound. Around that spot how all is changed! A wealthy town rises over the pastures which the British columns wet with their blood; the city of Boston covers compactly its old soil, and fills the bay, and encroaches on the sea, with its magazines and workshops and dwellings; the genius of commerce, rapidly effacing every landmark of the siege, has already levelled the site of Washington's last fort; the overflowing population extends itself into the adjacent country; the rivers as they fall are made to toil for man; restless intelligence teaches, in countless factories, new beneficial applications of the laws of nature; railroads diverge into the heart of the continent; ships, that are among the largest and fleetest that have been constructed, leave the harbor to visit every quarter of the globe; the neighboring college has grown into a university, true to the cause of good learning, of science, and free inquiry; in the happy development of its powers, New England has calmed the passions that were roused by oppression, and, tranquilly enjoying independence, breathes once more affection for its mother country, peace to all nations, and good-will to man.

CHAPTER LX.

THE FIRST ACT OF INDEPENDENCE.

FEBRUARY—APRIL, 1776.

ON the ninth day of February John Adams resumed his seat in congress, with Elbridge Gerry for a colleague, in place of the feeble Cushing, and with instructions from his constituents to establish liberty in America upon a permanent basis. His nature was robust and manly; now he was in the happiest mood of mind for asserting the independence of his country. He had confidence in the ability of New England to drive away their enemy; in Washington, as a brave and prudent commander; in his wife, who cheered him with the fortitude of womanly heroism; in the cause of his country, which seemed so bound up with the welfare of mankind that Providence could not suffer its defeat; in himself, for his convictions were clear, his will fixed, and his mind prepared to let his little property and his life go, sooner than the rights of his country.

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Looking into himself, he saw weaknesses enough, but neither meanness nor dishonesty nor timidity. His overweening self-esteem was his chief blemish; and, if he compared himself with his great fellow-workers, there was some point on which he was superior to any one of them; he had more learning than Washington, or any other American statesman of his age; better knowledge of freedom as grounded in law than Samuel Adams; clearer insight into the constructive elements of government than Franklin; more power in debate than Jefferson; more courageous manliness than Dickinson; more force in motion than Jay; so that, by varying and confining his comparisons, he could easily fancy himself the greatest of them all. He was

capable of thinking himself the centre of any circle, to which he had been no more than a tangent; his vanity was in such excess that in manhood it sometimes confused his judgment, and in age bewildered his memory; but the stain did not reach beyond the surface; it impaired the lustre, not the hardy integrity of his character. He was humane and frank, generous and clement; if he could never sit placidly under the shade of a greater reputation than his own, his envy, though it laid open how deeply his self-love was wounded, had hardly a tinge of malignity. He did his fame injustice when, later in life, he represented himself as suffering from persecutions on account of his early zeal for independence; he was no weakling to whine about injured feelings; he went to his task, sturdy and cheery and brave; he was the hammer, and not the anvil; and it was for others to fear his prowess and to shrink under his blows. His courage was unflinching in debate, and everywhere else; he never knew what fear was; and had he gone into the army, as he once longed to do, he would have taken there the virtues of temperance, decision, and intrepidity. To his latest old age, his spirit was robust, buoyant, and joyous; he saw ten times as much pleasure as pain in the world; and, after his arm quivered and his eye grew dim, he was ready to begin life anew and fight its battle over again. 1776. Feb.

In his youth he fell among skeptics, read Bolingbroke's works five times through, and accustomed himself to reason freely and think boldly; he esteemed himself a profound metaphysician, but had only skimmed the speculations of others; though at first destined to be a minister, he became a rebel to Calvinism, and never had any very fixed religious creed. For all that, he was a stanch man of New England, and his fond partiality to its people, its institutions, its social condition, and its laws, followed him into congress and its committees and social life, tinctured his judgment, and clinched his prepossessions; but the elements in New England that he loved most were those which were eminently friendly to universal culture and republican equality. A poor farmer's son, bent on making his way in the world,

at twenty years old beginning to earn his own bread, pinched and starved as master of a "stingy" country school, he formed early habits of order and frugality, and steadily advanced to fortune; but, though exact in his accounts, there was nothing niggardly in his thrift, and his modest hospitality was prompt and hearty. He loved homage, and it made him blind; to those who flattered him he gave his confidence freely, and often unwisely; and, while he watched the general movement of affairs with comprehensive sagacity, he was never a calm observer of individual men. He was of the choleric temperament: of a large and compact frame, he was singularly sensitive; could break out into uncontrollable rage, and never learned to rule his own spirit; but his anger did not so much drive him to do wrong as to do right ungraciously. No man was less fitted to gain his end by arts of indirection; he knew not how to intrigue, was indiscreetly talkative, and almost thought aloud; his ways
1776. Feb. of courting support were uncouth, so that he made few friends except by his weight of character and integrity, and was unapt as the leader of a party.

Hating intolerance in all its forms, an impassioned lover of civil liberty, as the glory of man and the best evidence and the best result of civilization, he, of all men in congress, was incomparable as a dogmatist; essentially right-minded, loving to teach with authority; pressing onward unsparingly with his argument; impatient of contradiction; unequalled as a positive champion of the right. He was the Martin Luther of the American revolution, compelled to utter his convictions fearlessly by an inborn energy which forbade his acting otherwise. He was now too much in earnest, and too much engaged by the greatness of his work, to think of himself; too anxiously desiring aid, to disparage those who gave it. In the fervor of his activity, his faults disappeared. His intellect and public spirit, all the noblest parts of his nature, were called into the fullest exercise, and strained to the uttermost of their healthful power. Combining, more than any other, farness of sight and fixedness of belief with courage and power of utterance, he was looked up to as the ablest debater in congress. Preserving some of the

habits of the lawyer, he was redundant in words and cumulative in argument; but his warmth and sincerity kept him from the affectations of a pedant or a rhetorician. Forbearance was no longer in season; the irrepressible talent of persevering, peremptory assertion was wanted; the more he was hurried along by his own vehement will, the better; now his country, humanity, the age, the hour, demanded that the right should be spoken out; his high excitement had not the air of passion, but appeared, as it was, the clear perception of the sublimity of his task. When, in the life of a statesman, were six months of more importance to the race than these six months in the career of John Adams?

On resuming his seat, he found a change in the dele- 1776. Feb.
gation of South Carolina. That province had sent to Philadelphia a vessel not larger than a pilot boat, for Gadsden, who held the highest rank in their army: at the risk of capture, the patriot embarked in January; fought his way through the ice in the Delaware, and against head-winds at sea; escaped the British cruisers only by running the small craft in which he sailed upon the sands of North Carolina; and, continuing his journey through Georgetown to Charleston by land, encouraged all who came round him on the way to demand independence. To aid in forming a new government, the elder Rutledge had preceded him, leaving the delegation from their colony to suffer from the absence of its strongest will and its clearest mind. In zeal and decision Chase of Maryland kept always far ahead of his friends; but that province had for the time, like Pennsylvania, yielded to proprietary influences; and its convention looked with distrust upon John Adams, as biassed in favor of revolution by the office of chief justice of Massachusetts, to which he had unexpectedly been chosen. Yet the members of congress listened with impatience to Wilson, when, on the thirteenth of February, he presented a long draft of an address to their constituents, in which they were made to disclaim the idea of renouncing their allegiance; and its author, perceiving that the majority relished neither its style nor its doctrine, allowed it to subside without a vote.

On the sixteenth, the great measure of enfranchising

American commerce was seriously considered. "Open your ports," said a member; "your trade will then become of so much consequence that foreigners will protect you."

1776. Feb. "In war," argued Wilson, "trade should be carried on with greater vigor than ever, after the manner of the United Provinces in their struggle against Spain. The merchants themselves must judge of the risks. Our vessels and our seamen are all abroad, and, unless we open our ports, will not return." Sherman wished first to secure a protective treaty with a foreign power. Harrison said more explicitly: "We have hobbled on under a fatal attachment to Great Britain; I felt that attachment as much as any man, but I feel a stronger one to my country." Wythe now took the lead. A learned and able lawyer, he also cultivated poetry and letters; not rich, he was above want; in his habits he was as abstemious as an ascetic; his manners had the frolic mirthfulness of innocence. Genial and loving, he blended gentleness with sincerity, firmness, and unswerving obedience to the law of duty. From 1774 his views coincided with those of Jefferson; and his artless simplicity of character, his legal erudition and acuteness, added persuasion to his words, as he drew attention to the real point at issue: "It is too true our ships may be taken, unless we provide a remedy; but we may authorize vessels to arm, and we may give letters of marque and reprisal. We may also invite foreign powers to make treaties of commerce with us; but, before this measure is adopted, it is to be considered in what character we shall treat. As subjects of Great Britain? as rebels? No: we must declare ourselves a free people." With this explanation, he moved a resolution: "That the colonies have a right to contract alliances with foreign powers." "This is independence," said an objector. The uestion whether the resolution should be considered was ırried by seven colonies against five; but the debate on ɔening the ports was prolonged through seven weeks of ɔsitation.

On the day of this discussion, the assembly of Pennvania formed a quorum. It required of Joseph Reed, had been chosen a member in the place of Mifflin, the

oath of allegiance to King George; in a few days, the more wary Franklin, who thus far had not taken his seat in so loyal a body, sent in his resignation, under a plea of age, and was succeeded by Rittenhouse.

On the nineteenth, Smith, the provost of the college in Philadelphia, delivered before congress, the Pennsylvania assembly, and other invited bodies, a eulogy on Montgomery: when, two days later, William Livingston moved a vote of thanks to the speaker, with a request that he would print his oration, objections were raised, "because he had declared the sentiments of the congress to be in favor of continuing in a state of dependence." Livingston was sustained by Duane, Wilson, and Willing; was opposed by Chase, John Adams, Wythe, Edward Rutledge, Wolcott, and Sherman; and the motion was withdrawn. 1776. Feb.

Yet there prevailed a disinclination to grapple with the ever recurring question which required immediate solution. The system of short enlistments appeared to Washington so fraught with danger, that, unasked by congress and against their resolves, he forced his advice upon them; and on the twenty-second they took into consideration his importunate protest against the policy of raising a new army for each campaign. The system, of which the hazard was incalculable, had precipitated the fate of Montgomery, had exposed his own position to imminent peril. Successive bodies of raw recruits could not be well trained; their losses were always great while becoming inured to the camp; it was their nature to waste arms, ammunition, camp utensils, and barracks; discipline would be relaxed for the sake of inducing them to a second enlistment; the expense of calling in militia men, of whom at every relief two must be paid for the service of one, was enormous. The trouble and perplexity of disbanding one army and raising another at the same instant, and in the presence of an enemy, were, as he knew, "such as it is scarcely in the power of words to describe, and such as no man who had experienced them once would ever undergo again." He therefore proposed that a large bounty should be offered, and soldiers enlisted for the war.

The obvious wisdom of the advice, and the solemnity with which it was enforced, arrested attention; and Samuel Adams proposed to take up the question of lengthening the time of enlistments, which had originally been limited from the hope of a speedy reconciliation, and from jealousy of a standing army. Some members would not yet admit the thought of a protracted war; some rested hope on Rockingham and Chatham; some wished first to ascertain the powers of the coming commissioners; some wanted to wait for an explicit declaration from France; opposition to a standing army had long been the watchword of liberty; the New England colonies had from their beginning been defended by their own militia; in the last French war, troops had been called out only for the season. "Enlistment for a long period," said Sherman, "is a state of slavery; a rotation of service in arms is favorable to liberty." "I am in favor of the proposition to raise men for the war," said John Adams; "but not to depend upon it, as men must be averse to it, and the war may last ten years." Congress was not in a mood to adopt decisive measures; and the entreaties of the general were passed by unheeded. England was sending over veteran armies; and they were to be met by soldiers engaged only for a year.

The debate branched off into a discussion on the pay of officers, respecting which the frugal statesmen of the north differed from those of the south; John Adams thought the democratic tendency in New England less dangerous than the aristocratic tendency elsewhere. It was too late for Harrison to insinuate that the war was a New England war; danger hung visibly over every part of the country; the twenty-seventh, the five middle colonies from New c to Maryland were therefore constituted one military department; the four south of the Potomac, another; and, on the first of March, six new generals of brigade were appointed. In the selection for Virginia was difficulty: Patrick Henry had been the first in her army; but the prevailing opinion recalled civil life; in the judgment of Washington, "Mercer have supplied the place well;" but he was a native

of Scotland; so the choice fell upon Andrew Lewis, whose courage Washington did not question, but who still suffered from "the odium thrown upon his conduct at Kanawha," where he had lingered in his camp, while the officers and men, whom he sent forth, with fearless gallantry and a terrible loss of life, shed over Virginia a lustre that reached to Tennessee and Kentucky. Congress soon repented of its election; and in less than a year forced Lewis to resign, by promoting an inferior officer over his head.

To meet the expenses of the war, four millions of dollars in bills were ordered to be struck; which, with six millions already issued, would form a paper currency of ten millions. A few days later, a committee of seven, including Duane and Robert Morris, was appointed on the ways and means of raising other supplies for the year; but they never so much as made a report. A like committee was appointed, continued, and enlarged; and their labors were equally fruitless. Congress had neither credit to borrow nor power to tax. 1776. March.

An officious suggestion from Lord Drummond, to send a deputation to England in quest of "liberal terms founded in equity and candor," could claim no notice; the want of supplies, which was so urgent that two thousand men in Washington's army were destitute of arms and unable to procure them, led to an appeal in a different direction; and Silas Deane, — a graduate of Yale College, at one time a schoolmaster, afterwards a trader; reputed in congress to be well versed in commercial affairs; superficial, yet able to write and speak readily and plausibly; wanting deliberate forecast, accurate information, solidity of judgment, secrecy, and integrity, — finding himself left out of the delegation from Connecticut, whose confidence he never possessed, solicited and received from the committee of secret correspondence an appointment as commercial commissioner and agent to France. That country, the committee instructed him to say, "is pitched upon for the first application, from an opinion that if we should, as there is appearance we shall, come to a total separation with Great Britain, France would be the power whose friendship it

would be fittest for us to obtain and cultivate." The announcement was coupled with a request for clothing and arms for twenty-five thousand men, a hundred field-pieces, and a suitable quantity of ammunition.

1776. March. This was the act of a committee; congress was itself about to send commissioners to Canada, and their instructions, reported by John Adams, Wythe, and Sherman, contained this clause: "You are to declare that it is our inclination that the people of Canada may set up such a form of government as will be most likely in their judgment to produce their happiness." This invitation to the Canadians to form a government without any limitation of time was, for three or four hours, resisted by Jay and others, on the ground that it "was an independency;" but the words were adopted, and they foreshadowed a similar decision for each one of the united colonies.

Early in the month, congress received the act of parliament prohibiting all trade with the thirteen colonies, and confiscating their ships and effects as if they were the ships and effects of open enemies. The first instinct was to retaliate; and on the sixteenth a committee of the whole considered the propriety of authorizing the inhabitants of the colonies to fit out privateers. Again it appeared that there were those who still listened to the hope of relief through Rockingham, or of redress through the royal commissioners, though the act of parliament conferred on them no power but to pardon. On the other hand, Franklin wished that the measure should be preceded by a declaration of war, as of one independent nation against another. The question was resumed on the eighteenth; and, after an able debate, privateers were authorized to cruise against ships and their cargoes, belonging to any inhabitant of Great Britain, though not of Ireland or the West Indies, by the vote of all New England, New York, Virginia, and North Carolina, against Pennsylvania and Maryland. The other colonies were not sufficiently represented to give their voices.

On the nineteenth, Wythe, with Jay and Wilson, was appointed to prepare a preamble to the resolutions. Wythe

found himself in a minority in the committee; and when, on the twenty-second, he presented their report, he moved an amendment, charging the king himself with their grievances, inasmuch as he had "rejected their petitions with scorn and contempt." This was new ground: hitherto congress had disclaimed the authority of parliament, not allegiance to the crown. Jay, Wilson, and Johnson opposed the amendment, as effectually severing the king from the thirteen colonies for ever; it was supported by Richard Henry Lee, who seconded it, by Chase, Sergeant of New Jersey, and Harrison. At the end of four hours, Maryland interposed its veto, and thus put off the decision for a day; but on the twenty-third the language of Wythe was accepted.

"From their form of government and steady attachment heretofore to royalty," wrote Washington, at this time, of the Virginians, "my countrymen will come reluctantly into the idea of independency; but time and persecution bring many wonderful things to pass." The question of opening the ports, after having been for months the chief subject of deliberation, was discussed through all the next fortnight. One kind of traffic which the European maritime powers still encouraged was absolutely forbidden, not from political reasons merely, but from a conviction of its unrighteousness and cruelty; and without any limitation as to time, or any reservation of a veto to the respective colonies, it was resolved, "that no slaves be imported into any of the thirteen united colonies." The vote was pregnant with momentous consequences. From the activity of the trade in the preceding years, the negro race had been gaining relatively upon the white; and, as its power consists in the combined force of its numbers and its intelligence, it might in some parts of the continent have endangered the supremacy of the white man; but the latter was sure to increase more rapidly than the negro, now that the continent was barred against further importations of slaves. The prohibition made moreover a revolution in the state of the black men already in America; from a body of laborers, many of them barbarians, perpetually recruited and

1776. April.

increased from barbarous African tribes, they were transformed into an insulated class, living in a state of domesticity, dependent for culture, employment, and support on a superior race; and it was then the prevailing opinion, especially in Virginia, that the total prohibition of the slave-trade would, at no very distant day, be followed by universal emancipation.

1776. April.

The first who, as far as appears, suggested that negroes might be emancipated, and a "public provision be made to transport them to Africa, where they might probably live better than in any other country," was Samuel Hopkins, of Rhode Island, a theologian, who taught that, "through divine interposition, sin is an advantage to the universe;" a firm believer in the coming of the millennium; a theorist of high ideal conceptions, who held virtue to require more than disinterested love, a love that is willing to make a sacrifice of itself. Writing in a town which had grown rich by the slave-trade, he addressed a long and elaborate memorial to the members of the body representing the United States, "entreating them to be the happy instruments of procuring and establishing universal liberty to white and black, to be transmitted down to the latest posterity." His elaborate argument had influence with some of them in their respective states; but after diligent search I cannot find that the document met with notice from the continental congress, which scrupulously reserved to the several colonies the modification of their internal policy.

Letters to members of congress expressed apprehension lest the attempt to raise the slaves against their masters in Virginia should be followed by severity against the negro; but no one of any other colony interposed with his advice or his opinions; and it is the concurrent testimony of all, that the Virginians conducted themselves towards the unfortunate race with moderation and tenderness, and that, while their wrath at Dunmore swelled with a violence which overwhelmed their internal divisions, and made them well-nigh unanimous for independence, it did not turn against the blacks, of whom even the insurgents, when taken captive, were treated with forbearance.

The slave-trade having been denied to be a legitimate traffic, and branded as a crime against humanity, at last, on the sixth of April, the thirteen colonies threw open their commerce to all the world, "not subject to the king of Great Britain." In this manner, the colonial system was swept away from them for ever, and the flag of every nation invited to their harbors. The vote abolished the British custom-houses, and instituted none in their stead. Absolute free trade took the place of hoary restrictions; the products of the world could be imported from any country in any friendly bottom, and the products of American industry in like manner exported, without a tax. 1776. April 6.

This virtual declaration of independence, made with no limitation of time, brought the conflict between the congress and the proprietary government of Pennsylvania to a crisis, which presaged internal strife and a war of party against party. On the twenty-eighth of February, the committee of correspondence of Philadelphia, against the wish of Joseph Reed, their chairman, resolved to call a convention of the people. This was the wisest measure that could have been proposed; and had Dickinson, Morris, and Reed, like Franklin, Clymer, and Mackean, joined heartily in its support, no conflict could have ensued, except between determined royalists and the friends of American liberty. The proprietary interest, by the instinct of self-preservation, repelled the thought of independence, complained that, to save one charter, they were called upon to sacrifice their own, wished for delay, and made no concessions but from fear of being superseded by the people. And how could an assembly of men, who before entering on their office took the vow of allegiance to the king, guide a revolution against his sovereignty, or be fitly intrusted with the privilege of electing delegates to the continental congress? At a time when all rightful power was held to be derived from the people, was it proper for a government emanating from the king, and having a royalist at its head, to assume the reform of civil institutions for the people of Pennsylvania?

But the fear of a convention gave the assembly such a start, that the committee of correspondence were persuaded

to suspend its call. In the assembly, the party of resistance must rely chiefly on Dickinson, Morris, and Reed. But the logical contradiction in the mind of Dickinson, which had manifested itself in the Farmer's Letters, still perplexed his conduct; and he urged upon every individual and every body of men over whom he had any influence the necessity of making terms of accommodation with Great Britain. In this way he dulled the resentment of the people, and paralyzed the impulse of self-sacrificing courage. The royalists shored up his declining importance; and, in their name, Inglis of New York, for a time rector of Trinity church and afterwards bishop of Nova Scotia, one of the bitterest of partisans, publicly burned incense to his "native candor, his unbounded benevolence, his acknowledged humanity, his exalted virtue, as the illustrious defender of the constitution against the siren form of independence."

Robert Morris, an Englishman by birth and in part by education, was a merchant of vast designs, speculative, and indefatigable in the pursuit of gain; but he brought to the American cause "a masterly understanding, an open temper, and an honest heart." With union, he had "no doubt that the colonies could at their pleasure choose between a reconciliation and total independence;" and he opposed the latter, because he thought its agitation tended to produce division, of which he dreaded "even the appearance;" but, if the liberties of America could not otherwise be secured, he was ready to renounce the connection with Great Britain, and fight his way through.

1776. April.

Reed, whose influence was enhanced by his possession of the intimate confidence of Washington, had neither the timidity of Dickinson nor the positiveness of Morris, and he carried into public affairs less passion than either. He willingly left the outline of his opinions indistinct, and was led by his temper to desire a compromise between extremes. His wife was an English woman, but she nobly won him by her unaffected attachment to the American. His love for his rising and dependent family made him more anxious to avoid a lee shore, and keep where was room to tack and change. Elected as the

candidate of the ardent patriots, his principles were naturally thought to militate against reconciliation; but in this they were much misunderstood: it was his judgment that the happiness and prosperity of America would best be promoted by dependence. In the hope of sufficient concessions from England, he wished to maintain the constituted proprietary assembly, to prevent the call of a popular convention, and to delay an irrevocable decision. 1776. April.

To check the popular movement, it was necessary to enlarge the representation, raise several battalions, and reverse the instructions to the Pennsylvania delegates. The assembly sat with closed doors, and its proceedings manifest a good understanding with the proprietary and his friends. A bill for the increase of the popular representation by seventeen new members, of whom four were to be allowed to Philadelphia, was brought in by a committee of which Dickinson and Reed were the principal members; and the ayes and noes on the question of its adoption were ostentatiously put on record, making their omission on all other occasions the more significant. The act received the sanction of the proprietary governor, and the first day of May was appointed for the new elections. The house consented to raise three battalions; extended conditionally the period of enlistment to the end of 1777, by the casting vote of its speaker; and, for answering the exigencies of the province, ordered eighty-five thousand pounds to be forthwith struck in bills of credit. Then, on the sixth of April, after a long debate, of which there is no report, just before its adjournment, it decided by a great majority not to alter the instructions given at its last sitting to the delegates for the province in congress; and they were once more enjoined to dissent from and utterly reject any proposition that might lead to a separation from the mother country or a change of the proprietary government.

This was the result which Dickinson desired; the support of the assembly of Pennsylvania soothed the irritation that attended his defeats in congress; but Morris asked uneasily: "Where are these commissioners? If they are to come, what detains them? It is time we should be on a certainty."

Duane of New York, who like Robert Morris was prepared for extreme measures, if the British proposition should prove oppressive or frivolous, spoke for delay. "I expect little," said he, "from the justice, and less from the generosity of administration; but the interest of Great Britain may compel her ministers to offer us reasonable terms; while commissioners are daily looked for, I am unwilling that we should by any irrevocable measure put it out of our power to terminate this destructive war; I wait for the expected propositions with painful anxiety."

1776. April. This waiting for commissioners Samuel Adams treated with scorn. His words were: "Is not America already independent? Why not, then, declare it? Because, say some, it will for ever shut the door of reconciliation. But Britain will not be reconciled, except upon our abjectly submitting to tyranny, and asking and receiving pardon for resisting it." "Moderate gentlemen are flattering themselves with the prospect of reconciliation when the commissioners that are talked of shall arrive; but what terms are we to expect from them that will be acceptable to the people of America? Has the king of Great Britain ever yet discovered the least degree of that princely virtue, clemency? It is my opinion that his heart is more obdurate, and his disposition towards the people of America is more unrelenting and malignant, than was that of Pharaoh towards the Israelites in Egypt." "No foreign power can consistently yield comfort to rebels, or enter into any kind of treaty with these colonies, till they declare themselves independent."

On the twenty-eighth of April, John Adams wrote to his wife: "We are hastening rapidly to great events. Governments will be up, everywhere, before midsummer, and an end to royal style, titles, and authority. Such mighty revolutions make a deep impression on the minds of men, and set many violent passions at work. May God in his providence overrule the whole for the good of mankind." Yet Dickinson and others, among whom were found William Livingston of New Jersey and the elder Laurens of South Carolina, wished to make no such declaration before an alliance with the king of France.

CHAPTER LXI.

TURGOT AND VERGENNES.

MARCH—MAY, 1776.

FOR a twelvemonth the problem of granting aid to the American insurgents had, under all its aspects, been debated in the cabinet of the king of France, and had not yet found its solution. Louis XVI. was a bigot to the principle of regal power; but George III. wanted, in his eyes, the seal of legitimacy: his sense of right, which prompted him to keep good faith with the English, was confused by assertions that the British ministry was capable of breaking the existing peace without a warning, if it could thus win popular favor or votes in parliament: he disliked to help rebels; but these rebels were colonists, and his kingdom could recover its share in the commerce of the world only by crushing the old colonial system, from which France had been shut out. He had heard and had read very much on the subject, but without arriving at a conclusion. His ministers were irreconcilably divided. Vergennes promoted the emancipation of America with resoluteness and prudence, remaining always master of himself, and always mindful that he was a subordinate in the cabinet of which he was in truth the stay and the guide. As minister of foreign affairs, he employed French diplomacy to bring in a steady current of opinion and statements that would supersede the necessity of his advice, which was given so tardily and so calmly that it seemed to flow not from himself, but from his attachment to monarchy and to France. The quiet and uniform influence of his department slowly and imperceptibly overcame the scruples of the young and inexperienced prince, whose instincts were dull, and whose

1776. March.

reflective powers could not grasp the question. Sartine, the minister of the marine, and St. Germain, the new secretary of war, who had been called from retirement and poverty to reform the abuses in the French army, sustained the system of Vergennes. On the other side, Maurepas, the head of the cabinet, was for peace, though his frivolity and desire to please left his opinions to the control of circumstances. Peace was the wish of Malesherbes, who had the firmness of sincerity, yet was a man of meditation and study rather than of action; and Turgot, who excelled them all in administrative ability, and was the best minister of finance that ever served a Bourbon, was immovable in his opposition to a war with Britain.

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The faithful report from Bonvouloir, the French agent at Philadelphia, reached Vergennes in the first days of March, and furnished him an occasion for bringing before the king with unusual solemnity these "considerations:"

"The position of England towards its colonies in North America, and the possible and probable consequences of the contest, whatever its issue may be, have beyond a doubt every claim to the most serious attention of France and Spain. Whether they should desire the subjection or the independence of the English colonies, is problematical; on either hypothesis, they are menaced with danger, which human forecast can perhaps neither prevent nor turn aside.

"If the continuation of the civil war may be regarded as infinitely advantageous to the two crowns, inasmuch as it will exhaust the victors and the vanquished, there is, on the other hand, room to fear, first, that the English ministry, feeling the insufficiency of its means, may stretch out the hand of conciliation; or, secondly, that the king of England, [illegible] English America, may use it as an instru- [illegible] European England; or, thirdly, that the [illegible]eaten on the continent of America, may [illegible] the expense of France and Spain, to [illegible] and to conciliate the insurgents by offer- [illegible]erce and supply of the isles; or, fourthly, [illegible] on attaining independence, may become [illegible]necessity, and, by forcing their surplus

produce upon Spanish America, destroy the ties which bind our colonies to their metropolis.

"These different suppositions can almost equally conduct to war with France and Spain; on the first, because England will be tempted, by the large force she has prepared, to make the too easy conquests of which the West Indies offer the opportunity; on the second, because the enslavement of the metropolis can be effected only by flattering the national hatred and jealousy; on the third, 1776. March. through the necessity of the ministry to divert the rage of the English people by a useful and brilliant acquisition, which would be the prize of victory, or the compensation for defeat, or the pledge of reconciliation.

"The state of the colonies of the two nations is such, that, with the exception of Havana, perhaps no one is in a condition to resist the smallest part of the forces which England now sends to America. The physical possibility of the conquest is, therefore, too evident; as to the moral probability of an invasion, which would be unprovoked and contrary to public faith and to treaties, we should abuse ourselves strangely by believing the English susceptible of being held back by such motives. Experience has but too well proved that they regard as just and honorable whatever is advantageous to their own nation or destructive to their rivals. Their statesmen never calculate the actual amount of ill which France does them, but the amount of ill which she may one day be able to do them. The opposition seem to have embraced the same general maxims; and the ministry may seize the only way of extricating themselves from their embarrassment, by giving up the reins to Chatham, who, with Shelburne, Sandwich, Richmond, and Weymouth, may come to terms with the Americans, and employ the enormous mass of forces put in activity to rectify the conditions of the last treaty of peace, against which they have ever passionately protested. Englishmen of all parties are persuaded that a popular war against France or an invasion of Mexico would terminate, or at least allay, their domestic dissensions, as well as furnish resources for the extinguishment of their national debt.

"In the midst of so many perils, the strong love of peace, which is the preference of the king and the king of Spain, seems to prescribe the most measured course. If the dispositions of these two princes were for war, if they were disposed to follow the impulse of their interests and perhaps of the justice of their cause, which is the cause of humanity, so often outraged by England, if their military and financial means were in a state of development proportionate to their substantial power, it would, without doubt, be necessary to say to them, that Providence has marked out this moment for the humiliation of England, that it has struck her with the blindness which is the surest precursor of
1776. March. destruction, and that it is time to avenge upon her the evils which since the commencement of the century she has inflicted on those who have had the misfortune to be her neighbors or her rivals. It would then be necessary not to neglect any of the means suited to render the next campaign as animated as possible and procure advantages to the Americans; and the degree of passion and exhaustion would determine the moment to strike the decisive blows, which would make England step back into the rank of secondary powers, ravish from her the empire which she claims in the four quarters of the world, and deliver the universe from a greedy tyrant who is bent on absorbing all power and all wealth. But this is not the point of view chosen by the two monarchs; and their part appears under actual circumstances to limit itself, with one exception, to a cautious but active foresight.

"Care must be taken to avoid being compromised, and not to provoke the ills which it is wished to prevent; yet we must not flatter ourselves that the most absolute and the most rigorous inaction will guarantee us from suspicion. The continuance of the war for at least one year is desirable for the two crowns. To that end the British ministry must be maintained in the persuasion that France and Spain are pacific, so that it may not fear to embark in an active and costly campaign; whilst, on the other hand, the courage of the Americans might be kept up by secret favors and vague hopes, which would prevent an accommodation, and assist

to develop ideas of independence. The evils which the British will make them suffer will embitter their minds; their passions will be more and more inflamed by the war; and, should the mother country be victorious, she would for a long time need all her strength to keep down their spirit; so that she would never dare to expose herself to their efforts for the recovery of their liberty in connection with a foreign enemy. 1776. March.

"If all these considerations are judged to be as true and as well grounded as they are probable, we ought to continue with dexterity to tranquillize the English ministry as to the intentions of France and Spain. It will also be proper for the two monarchies to extend to the insurgents secret aid in military stores and money, without seeking any return for it beyond the political object of the moment; but it would not comport with the dignity or interest of the king to treat with the insurgents, till the liberty of English America shall have acquired consistency.

"It is at all times useful and proper, in this moment of public danger it is indispensable, to raise the effective force of the two monarchies to the height of their real power; for, of all conjectures which circumstances authorize, the least probable is that peace can be preserved, whatever may be the issue of the present war between England and her colonies.

"Such are the principal points of view which this important problem admits of, and which have been simply indicated to the wisdom and penetration of the king and of his council."

This discussion of American affairs was simultaneous with the passionate opposition of the aristocracy of France to the reforms of Turgot. The parliament of Paris had just refused to register the royal edicts which he had wisely prepared for the relief of the peasants and the mechanics of the kingdom. "Ah," said the king, as he heard of its contumacy, "I see plainly there is no one who loves the people but Turgot and I;" and the registration of the decrees was carried through only by the extreme exercise of his prerogative against a remonstrance of the aristocracy, who to the

last resisted the measures of justice to the laboring classes, as "confounding the nobility and the clergy with the rest of the people."

The king directed Vergennes to communicate his memorial on the colonies to Turgot, whose written opinion upon it was required. Vergennes obeyed, recommending to his colleague secrecy and celerity, for Spain was anxiously waiting the determination of the court of France. Turgot took more than three weeks for deliberation, allowed full course to his ideas, and on the sixth of April gave the king this advice:

1776. April.

"Whatever may or ought to be the wish of the two crowns, nothing can arrest the course of events which sooner or later will certainly bring about the independence of the English colonies, and, as an inevitable consequence, effect a total revolution in the relations of Europe and America. Of all the suppositions that can be made on the event of this war, the reduction of these colonies by England presents to the two crowns the perspective of the most lasting quiet. The Anglo-American enthusiasts for liberty may be overwhelmed by force, but their will can never be broken. If their country is laid waste, they may disperse themselves among the boundless backwoods, inaccessible to a European army, and from the depths of their retreats be always ready to trouble the English establishments on their coasts; while England would lose all the advantages that she has thus far derived from America in peace and war. If it is reduced without a universal devastation, the courage of the colonists will be like a spring, which remains bent only so long as an undiminished pressure weighs it down. If my view is just, if the complete success of the English ministry would be the most fortunate result for France and Spain, it follows that the project of that ministry is the most extravagant which can be conceived; and this very few persons will doubt.

"Should the English government, after painful and costly efforts, fail in its hostile plans against the colonies, it will hardly be disposed at once to multiply its enemies, and form enterprises for compensation at the expense of

France and Spain, when it will have lost the point of support which could alone have made success probable.

"The present war will probably end in the absolute independence of the colonies, and that event will certainly be the epoch of the greatest revolution in the commerce and politics not of England only, but of all Europe. From the prudent conduct, the courage, and intelligence of the Americans, we may augur that they will take care, above all things, to give a solid form to their government; and as a consequence they will love peace, and seek to preserve it. 1776. April.

"The rising republic will have no need of conquests to find a market for its products; it will have only to open its harbors to all nations. Sooner or later, with good-will or from necessity, all European nations who have colonies will be obliged to leave them an entire liberty of trade, to regard them no more as subject provinces, but as friendly states, distinct and separate, even if protected. This the independence of the English colonies will inevitably hasten. Then the illusion which has lulled our politicians for two centuries will be dispelled; it will be seen that power founded on monopoly is precarious and frail, and that the restrictive system was useless and chimerical at the very time when it dazzled the most.

"When the English themselves shall recognise the independence of their colonies, every mother country will be forced in like manner to exchange its dominion over its colonies for bonds of friendship and fraternity. If this is an evil, there is no way of preventing it, and no course to be taken but resignation to the absolute necessity. The powers which shall obstinately resist will none the less see their colonies escape from them, to become their enemies instead of their allies.

"The yearly cost of colonies in peace, the enormous expenditures for their defence in war, lead to the conclusion that it is more advantageous for us to grant them entire independence, without waiting for the moment when events will compel us to give them up. This view would, not long since, have been scorned as a paradox, and rejected

with indignation. At present we may be the less revolted at it, and perhaps it may not be without utility to prepare consolation for inevitable events. Wise and happy will be that nation which shall first know how to bend to the new circumstances, and consent to see in its colonies allies and not subjects. When the total separation of America shall have healed the European nations of the jealousy of commerce, there will exist among men one great cause of war the less, and it is very difficult not to desire an event which is to accomplish this good for the human race. In our colonies we shall save many millions; and, if we acquire the liberty of commerce and navigation with all the northern continent, we shall be amply compensated.

1776. April. "The position of Spain with regard to its American possessions will be more embarrassing. Unhappily she has less facility than any other power to quit the route that she has followed for two centuries, and conform to a new order of things. Thus far she has directed her policy to maintaining the multiplied prohibitions with which she has embarrassed her commerce. She has made no preparations to substitute for empire over her American provinces a fraternal connection founded on the identity of origin, language, and manners, without the opposition of interests; to offer them liberty as a gift, instead of yielding it to force. Nothing is more worthy of the wisdom of the king of Spain and his council, than from this present time to fix their attention on the possibility of this forced separation, and on the measures to be taken to prepare for it.

"It is a very delicate question to know, if we can, underhand, help the Americans to ammunition or money. There is no difficulty in shutting our eyes on their purchases in our ports; our merchants are free to sell to any who will buy of them; we do not distinguish the colonists from the English themselves; but to aid the Americans with money would excite in the English just complaints.

"The idea of sending troops and squadrons into our colonies for their security against invasion must be rejected as ruinous, insufficient, and dangerous. We ought to limit ourselves to measures of caution less expensive, and less

approaching to a state of hostility; to precipitate nothing unless the conduct of England shall give us reason to believe that she really thinks of attacking us.

"Combining all circumstances, it may certainly be believed that the English ministry does not desire war, and our preparations ought to tend only to the maintenance of peace. Peace is the preference of the king of France and the king of Spain. Every plan of aggression ought to be rejected, first of all from moral reasons. To these are to be added the reasons of interest, drawn from the situation of the two powers. Spain has not in her magazines the requirements for arming ships-of-war, and cannot in time of need assemble a due number of sailors, nor count on the ability and experience of her naval officers. Her finances are not involved, but they could not suffice for years of extraordinary efforts. 1776. April.

"As for us, the king knows the situation of his finances; he knows that, in spite of economies and ameliorations since the beginning of his reign, the expenditure exceeds the revenue by twenty millions; the deficit can be made good only by an increase of taxes, a partial bankruptcy, or frugality. The king from the first has rejected the method of bankruptcy, and that of an increase of taxes in time of peace; but frugality is possible, and requires nothing but a firm will. At his accession, his finances were involved, his army and navy in a state of weakness that was scarcely to have been imagined. For an unavoidable war, resources could be found; but war ought to be shunned as the greatest of misfortunes, since it would render impossible, perhaps for ever, a reform, absolutely necessary to the prosperity of the state and the solace of the people."

Turgot had been one of the first to foretell and to desire the independence of the colonies, as the means of regenerating the world; his virtues made him worthy to have been the fellow laborer of Washington; but, as a minister of his country, he looked at passing events through the clear light of integrity in combination with genius.

The public mind in France applied itself to improving the condition of the common people; Chastellux, in his work

on public felicity, which was just then circulating in Paris, with the motto NEVER DESPAIR, represented as "the sole end of all government, and the universal aim of all philosophy, the greatest happiness of the greatest number;" Turgot, by his earnest purpose to restrain profligate expenditure and lighten the grievous burdens of the laboring classes, seemed called forth by Providence to prop the falling throne, and hold back the nobility from the fathomless chaos towards which they were drifting. Yet he could look nowhere for support but to the unenlightened king, who had no fixed principle, and therefore naturally inclined to distrust. Malesherbes, in utter hopelessness, resolved to retire. Maurepas, who professed, like Turgot, a preference for peace, could not conceive the greatness of his soul, and beheld in him a dangerous rival, whose activity and vigor exposed his own insignificance to public shame. The keeper of the seals, a worthless man, given up to intemperance, greedy of the public money, which without a change in the head of the treasury he could not get either by gift or by embezzlement, nursed this jealousy; and, setting himself up as the champion of the aristocracy, he prompted Maurepas to say to the king that Turgot was an enemy to religion and the royal authority, disposed to annihilate the privileges of the nobility and to overturn the state.

1776. April.

Sartine had always supported the American policy of Vergennes, and had repeatedly laid before the king his views on the utility of the French colonies, and on the condition of India. "If the navy of France," said he, "were at this moment able to act, France never had a fairer opportunity to avenge the unceasing insults of the English. I beseech your majesty to consider that England, by its most cherished interests, its national character, its form of government, and its position, is and always will be the true, the only, and the eternal enemy of France. Sire, with England no calculation is admissible but that of her interests and her caprices; that is, of the harm that she can do us. In 1755, at a time of perfect peace, the English attacked your ships, proving that they hold nothing sacred. We have every reason to fear that, whatever may be the

issue of their war with the insurgents, they will take advantage of their armament to fall upon your colonies or ports. Your minister would be chargeable with guilt, if he did not represent to your majesty the necessity of adopting the most efficacious measures to parry the bad faith of your natural enemies."

These suggestions were received with a passive acquiescence; the king neither comprehended nor heeded Turgot's advice, which was put aside by Vergennes as speculative and irrelevant. The correspondence with Madrid continued; Grimaldi, the Genoese adventurer, who still was minister for foreign affairs, complained of England for the aid it had rendered the enemies of Spain in Morocco, in Algeria, and near the Philippine Isles, approved of sending aid clandestinely to the English colonies, and in an autograph letter, despatched without the knowledge even of the ambassadors of the two courts, promised to bear a part of the expense, provided the supplies could be sent from French ports in such a manner that the participation of the Catholic king could be disavowed. When, on the twenty-sixth of April, the French ministry held a conference with the Spanish ambassador, to consider the dangers that menaced the two kingdoms and the necessity of preparing for war, neither Turgot nor Malesherbes was present. Vergennes was left to pursue his own policy without obstruction; and he followed the precedent set by England during the troubles in Corsica. After a year's hesitation and resistance, the king of France, early in May, informed the king of Spain that he had resolved, under the name of a commercial house, to advance a million of French livres, about two hundred thousand dollars, towards the supply of the wants of the Americans; the Catholic king, after a few weeks' delay, assigning a false reason at his own treasury for demanding the money, and admitting no man in Spain into the secret of its destination except Grimaldi, remitted to Paris a draft for a million livres more, as his contribution. Beaumarchais, who was trusted in the American business and in eighteen months had made eight journeys to London, had been very fretful, as if the scheme

1776. May.

which he had importunately urged upon the king had been censured and rejected. "I sat long in the pit," so
1776. Vergennes explained himself, "before I took a part on the stage; I have known men of all classes and of every temper of mind; in general, they all railed and found fault; and yet I have seen them in their turn commit the errors which they had so freely condemned; for an active or a passive principle, call it as you will, draws men always towards a common centre. Do not think advice rejected, because it is not eagerly adopted; all slumber is not a lethargy." The French court resolved to increase the subsidy, which was to encourage the insurgents to persevere; and, in early summer, Beaumarchais announced to Arthur Lee, at his chambers in the Temple, that he was authorized to promise the Americans assistance to the amount of two hundred thousand louis d'ors, nearly one million of dollars.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE CAROLINAS AND RHODE ISLAND.

FEBRUARY—MAY, 1776.

THE American congress needed an impulse from the resolute spirit of some colonial convention, and an example of a government springing wholly from the people. Massachusetts had followed closely the forms of its charter; New Hampshire had deviated as little as possible from its former system; neither of the two had appointed a chief executive officer. On the eighth of February, the convention of South Carolina, by Drayton their president, presented their thanks to John Rutledge and Henry Middleton for their services in the American congress, which had made its appeal to the King of kings, established a navy, treasury, and general post-office, exercised control over commerce, and granted to colonies permission to create civil institutions, independent of the regal authority. 1776. Feb.

The next day Gadsden arrived, and in like manner heard the voice of public gratitude; in return, he presented the standard which was to be used by the American navy, representing in a yellow field a rattlesnake of thirteen full-grown rattles, coiled to strike, with the motto: DON'T TREAD ON ME. When, on the tenth, the report on reforming the provincial government was considered, and many hesitated, Gadsden spoke out not only for the new constitution, but for the absolute independence of America. The sentiment came like a sudden thunderbolt upon the members, of whom the majority had thus far refused to contemplate the end towards which they were irresistibly impelled. One member avowed his willingness to ride post by day and night to Philadelphia, in order to assist in reuniting Great Britain

and her colonies; the elder Laurens "bore his testimony against the principles of 'Common Sense;'" but meantime the criminal laws could not be enforced for want of officers; public and private affairs were running into confusion; the imminent danger of invasion was proved by intercepted letters; so that necessity compelled the adoption of some adequate system of rule.

While a committee of eleven was preparing the organic law, Gadsden, on the thirteenth, began to act as senior officer of the army. Measures of defence were vigorously pursued, companies of militia called down to Charleston, and the military forces augmented by two regiments of riflemen. In the early part of the year Sullivan's Island was a wilderness; near the present fort, the wet ground was thickly covered with myrtle, live oak, and palmettos; there, 1776. March. on the second of March, William Moultrie was ordered to take the command, and complete a fort large enough to hold a garrison of a thousand men. The colony, which had already issued one million one hundred and twenty thousand pounds of paper money, voted an additional sum of seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

A strong party in the provincial congress, under the lead of Rawlins Lowndes, endeavored to postpone the consideration of the form of government reported by the committee; but the nearness of danger would not admit of delay; and the clauses that were most resisted were adopted by a vote of about four to three. But when, on the twenty-first of March, they received the act of parliament of the preceding December, which authorized the capture of American vessels and property, they gave up the hope of reconciliation; and on the twenty-sixth, professing a desire of accommodation with Great Britain even "though traduced and treated as rebels," asserting "the good of the people to be the origin and end of all government," and enumerating with clearness and fulness the unwarrantable acts of the British parliament, the implacability of the king, and the violence of the officers bearing his commission, they established a constitution for South Carolina. The executive power was intrusted to a president, who was endowed with a veto on legislation, and

who was also commander in chief; the congress then in session resolved itself into a general assembly, till their successors should be elected by the people in the following October; the numerous and arbitrary representation which had prevailed originally in the committee of 1774, and had been continued in the first and second congress of 1775, without respect to numbers or property, was confirmed by the new instrument, so that Charleston kept the right of sending thirty members; the old laws prescribing the qualifications of the electors and the elected were continued in force; a legislative council of thirteen was elected by the general assembly out of their own body; the general assembly and the legislative council elected jointly by ballot the president and vice-president; the privy council of seven was composed of the vice-president, three members chosen by ballot by the assembly, and three by the legislative council; the judges were chosen by ballot jointly by the two branches of the legislature, by whose address they might be removed, though otherwise they were to hold office during good behavior.

On the twenty-seventh, John Rutledge was chosen president, Henry Laurens vice-president, and William Henry Drayton chief justice. On accepting office, Rutledge addressed the general assembly: "To preside over the welfare of a brave and generous people is in my opinion the highest honor any man can receive; I wish that your choice had fallen upon one better qualified to discharge the arduous duties of this station; yet, in so perilous a season as the present, I will not withhold my best services. I assure myself of receiving the support and assistance of every good man in the colony; and my most fervent prayer to the omnipotent Ruler of the universe is that, under his gracious providence, the liberties of America may be for ever preserved." 1776. March.

On the twenty-eighth the oaths of office were administered; then, to make a formal promulgation of the new constitution, the council and assembly, preceded by the president and vice-president, and the sheriff bearing the sword of state, walked out in a solemn procession from the state-

house to the exchange, in the presence of the troops and the militia of South Carolina, whose line extended down Broad Street and along the bay. The people, as they crowded round the men whom they had chosen to office from among themselves, gazed on the new order with rapture and tears of joy.

1776. April. Early in April, the legislative bodies, while they still earnestly desired an accommodation with Great Britain, addressed the president: "Conscious of our natural and unalienable rights, and determined to make every effort to retain them, we see your elevation, from the midst of us, to govern this country, as the natural consequence of unprovoked, cruel, and accumulated oppressions. Chosen by the suffrages of a free people, you will make the constitution the great rule of your conduct; in the discharge of your duties under that constitution we will support you with our lives and fortunes."

In South Carolina, a large part of the population was British by birth, and many of the herdsmen and hunters in the upper country had not been on the continent more than ten years; they had taken no part in the movements of resistance; had sent no gifts to the poor of Boston, no pledges to Massachusetts. At least one half of the inhabitants were either inert or inclined to the king. When the native planters risked their fortunes, the peace of their families, and their lives, from sympathy with a distant colony with which they had no similarity of pursuits, no considerable commerce, and no personal intimacies, they had in their rear a population still attached to the crown, as well as hostile Indian tribes; in their houses and on their estates numerous bondmen of a different race; along the sea an unprotected coast, indented by bays and inlets and rivers. But their spirit rose with danger; in words penned by Drayton and Cotesworth Pinckney, the assembly condemned the British plan of sending commissioners to treat with the several colonies, as a fraudulent scheme for subverting their liberties by negotiations, and resolved to communicate with the court of Great Britain only through the continental congress.

When, on the eleventh of April, they closed their session, "On my part," said Rutledge, "a most solemn oath has been taken for the faithful discharge of my duty; on yours, a solemn assurance has been given to support me therein. Thus a public compact between us stands recorded. I shall keep this oath ever in mind; the constitution shall be the invariable rule of my conduct; our laws and religion, and the liberties of America, shall be maintained and defended to the utmost of my power; I repose the most perfect confidence in your engagement. And now, gentlemen, let me entreat that, if any persons in your several parishes and districts are still strangers to the nature and merits of the dispute between Great Britain and the colonies, you will explain it to them fully, and teach them, if they are so unfortunate as not to know, their inherent rights. Relate to them the various unjust and cruel statutes which the British parliament have enacted, and the many sanguinary measures to enforce an unlimited and destructive claim. The endeavors to engage barbarous nations to imbrue their hands in the innocent blood of helpless women and children, and the attempts to make ignorant domestics subservient to the most wicked purposes, are acts at which humanity must revolt. 1776. April.

"Show your constituents, then, the indispensable necessity which there was for establishing some mode of government in this colony; the benefits of that which a full and free representation has established; and that the consent of the people is the origin, and their happiness the end, of government. Let it be known that this constitution is but temporary, till an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America can be obtained, and that such an event is still desired. Disdaining private interest and present emolument, when placed in competition with the liberties of millions, and seeing no alternative but unconditional submission, or a defence becoming men born to freedom, no man who is worthy of life, liberty, or property, will hesitate about the choice. Although superior force may lay waste our towns and ravage our country, it can never eradicate from the breasts of free men those

principles which are ingrafted in their very nature. Such men will do their duty, neither knowing nor regarding consequences, but trusting that the Almighty arm, which has been so signally stretched out for our defence, will deliver them in a righteous cause.

"The eyes of the whole world are on America; the eyes of every other colony are on this, a colony whose reputation for generosity and magnanimity is universally acknowledged. I trust that there will be no civil discord here; and that the only strife amongst brethren will be, who shall do most to serve and to save an injured country."

The word which South Carolina hesitated to pronounce was uttered by North Carolina. That colony, proud of its victory over domestic enemies, and roused to defiance by the presence of Clinton, the British general, in one of their rivers, met in congress at Halifax on the fourth of April; on the eighth appointed a select committee, of which Harnett was the head, to consider the usurpations and violences of the British parliament and king; and on the twelfth, after listening to its report, unanimously "empowered their delegates in the continental congress to concur with the delegates of the other colonies in declaring independency and forming foreign alliances." At the same time, they reserved to their colony the sole right of forming its own constitution and laws.

1776. April.

North Carolina was the first colony to vote an explicit sanction to independence; South Carolina won from all patriots equal praise by her "virtuous and glorious example of instituting a complete government." When, on the twenty-third of April, the courts of justice were opened at Charleston, the chief justice, after an elaborate statement, charged the grand jury in these words: "The law of the land authorizes me to declare, and it is my duty to declare the law, that George III., king of Great Britain, has abdicated the government, that he has no authority over us, and we owe no obedience to him.

"It has been the policy of the British authority to cramp and confine our trade so as to be subservient to their commerce, our real interest being ever out of the question; the

new constitution is wisely adapted to enable us to trade with foreign nations, and thereby to supply our wants at the cheapest markets in the universe; to extend our trade infinitely beyond what has ever been known; to encourage manufactures among us; and to promote the happiness of the people from among whom, by virtue and merit, the poorest man may arrive at the highest dignity. O Carolinians! happy would you be under this new constitution, if you knew your happy state. True reconcilement never can exist between Great Britain and America, the latter being in subjection to the former. The Almighty created America to be independent of Britain; to refuse our labors in this divine work, is to refuse to be a great, a free, a pious and a happy people!"

Rutledge was equal to the office which he had accepted; order and method grew at once out of the substitution of a single executive for committees; from him the officers of the regiments, as well as of the militia, derived their commissions; to prepare for the British army and naval squadron which were known to be on the way, the mechanics and laborers of Charleston, assisted by great numbers of negroes from the country, were employed in fortifying the town. When the veteran Armstrong arrived to take the command of the army, he found little more to do than receive the hospitalities of the inhabitants.

In March, Delaware still hoped for conciliation. 1776. March. Lee, who in the same month took up his quarters in the palace of the governor at Williamsburg, querulous as ever, praised the congress of New York as "angels of decision" compared with the Virginia committee of safety. Letters, intercepted in April, indicated some April. concert on the part of Eden, the governor of Maryland, with Dunmore: Lee, though Maryland was not within his district, directed Samuel Purviance, of the committee of Baltimore, to seize Eden without ceremony or delay. The interference was resented as an insult on the authority which the people had constituted. The Maryland committee suffered their governor to remain at liberty on his parole, even after the continental congress directed his arrest.

1776. May. The spirit of temporizing showed itself still more clearly in Philadelphia. The men who desired a reconciliation with Great Britain upon the best terms she would give, but at any rate a reconciliation, held many meetings to prepare for the election of the additional burgesses in May; and, when the day of election came, the friends of independence carried only Clymer; the moderate men, combining with the proprietary party, the officers of the provincial government, the avowed tories, and such of the Roman Catholics as could not control their antipathy to the Presbyterians, elected the three others. The elections in the country were also not wholly unfavorable to the interests of the proprietary. Yet the success of the proprietary party was not a fair expression of public opinion: the franchise in the city was confined to those possessing fifty pounds; Germans, who composed a large part of the inhabitants of the province and were zealots for liberty, were not allowed to give their votes unless they were naturalized, and they could not be naturalized without taking the oath of allegiance to the king; moreover, of the natives of Pennsylvania, many hundreds of the warmest patriots were in the camp on the Hudson, and in Canada, leaving civil power to the timid who remained at home.

The hesitation of the assembly of Pennsylvania was in marked contrast with the fortitude of Rhode Island, whose general assembly, on the fourth day of May, discharged the inhabitants of that colony from allegiance to the king of Great Britain. The measure was carried in the upper house unanimously, and in the house of deputies, where sixty were present, with but six dissentient voices. The overturn was complete; the act was at once a declaration of independence, and the organization of a self-constituted republic. Its first exercise of independent power authorized its delegates in congress to join in treating with any prince, state, or potentate, for the security of the colonies, and directed them to favor the most proper measures for confirming the strictest union; at the same time, they were charged "to secure to the colony, in the strongest and most perfect manner, its present established form and all powers of govern-

ment, so far as they relate to its internal police, and the conduct of its own affairs, civil and religious."

The interest of the approaching campaign centred in New York, to which place Washington had repaired with all his forces that were not ordered to Canada. There the British government designed to concentrate its strength, in the hopes of overwhelming all resistance in one campaign. Meantime, the British general was awaiting re-enforcements at Halifax, and during the interval was willing that the attempt on the southern colonies should be continued. That expedition had been planned in October by the king himself; but the instructions to Clinton were not finished till December, nor received by him till May. He was to proclaim pardon to all but "the principal instigators of the rebellion, to dissolve provincial congresses and committees of safety, to restore the regular administration of justice, to arrest the persons and destroy the property of all who should refuse to give satisfactory tests of their obedience." From North Carolina he might proceed at his own choice to Virginia or to South Carolina, in like manner "to seize the persons and destroy the property of rebels." In South Carolina he was to reduce Charleston, as a prelude to the fall of Savannah.

The fleet and transports designed to act under Clinton did not leave Cork harbor till February; they were scattered by a storm soon after going to sea; they met most violent adverse gales and winds; and not till the third of May, after a passage of more than eighty days, did Sir Peter Parker, Cornwallis, and such ships as kept them company, enter Cape Fear River. Most of the transports had arrived before them. 1776. May.

All joined "to lament the fatal delays." With the formidable armament, Clinton inclined to look into the Chesapeake, which would bring him nearer New York; but Lord William Campbell urged an attack on Charleston; and, as intelligence was received "that the works erected by the rebels on Sullivan's Island, which was the key to the harbor, were unfinished, Clinton acquiesced in the proposal



of the commodore to attempt the reduction of that fortress by a sudden attack."

Before leaving his government, Martin sent a party to burn the house of Hooper, a delegate in the continental congress; Cornwallis, with nine hundred men, — it was his first exploit in America, — landed in Brunswick county, and, with a loss of two men killed and one taken prisoner, burned and ravaged the plantation of Robert Howe; and

1776. May. Clinton, as the British retired from North Carolina, by his proclamation of the fifth of May, invited the people "to appease the vengeance of an incensed nation," and offered pardon to all who would submit, except Robert Howe and Cornelius Harnett.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE WAY TO RESTORE PEACE.

MAY, 1776.

HOPE still rested on the royal commissioners for restoring peace; but the British ministers knew nothing of that great science which studies the character, innate energies, and dispositions of a people. The statesman, like others, can command nature only by obeying her laws; he can serve man only by respecting the conditions of his being; he can sway a nation only by penetrating what is at work in the mind of its masses, and taking heed of the state of its development; any attempt in that day to produce in Britain republics like those of New England could have brought forth nothing better than anarchy and civil war; the blind resolve to shape American institutions after the pattern of the British aristocracy led to a revolution. 1776. May.

In its policy towards America, Britain was at war with itself: its own monarchy was a limited one; and yet it claimed for the king in parliament unlimited rule over the colonies. Sandwich desired to exercise over them nothing short of a full and absolute authority, and regretted that the administration was cramped by the cry of liberty, with which no executive chief was troubled except that of England.

Had conciliation been designed, the commissioners would have been despatched long before; but the measure which had for its object the pacification of English opinion was suffered to drag along for more than a year, till the news that Howe had been driven from Boston burst upon the public, and precipitated the counsels of the ministry.

1776. May. The letters patent for the commissioners, which were issued on the sixth of May, conferred power on Lord Howe and General Howe, jointly and severally, to grant pardons to such as should give early proofs of their sincere abhorrence of their defection from loyalty, and should duly sue for mercy. The two points in controversy were the right of parliament to tax the colonies and its right to change their charters. Lord North, when he relapsed into his natural bias towards justice, used to say publicly that the right of taxation was abandoned; Germain always asserted that it was not. Lord North was willing to restore the charter of Massachusetts; the king wished rather to renounce America. The instructions to the commissioners were founded upon the resolution of the twentieth of February, 1775, which conformed to the opinions of Germain and the king, and which the colonies had declared to be insufficient. The parliamentary change in the charter of Massachusetts was to be enforced; and secret instructions required that Connecticut and Rhode Island should be compelled, if possible, to accept analogous changes; so that not only was unconditional submission required, but in the event of victory other colonial charters were to be violated, in order to carry out the system which the king had pursued from the time of the ministry of Bute. Lord Howe wished well to the Americans, kept up his friendly relations with Chatham, and escaped the suspicion of a subservient complicity with the administration. It was said by his authority, that he would not go to America unless he had powers to treat on terms of conciliation; he refused to accept a civilian as his colleague, and, though his brother was named with him in the commission, he required and obtained permission to act alone; but, if his sincerity is left unimpeached, it is at the expense of his reputation for discernment; for the commission for restoring peace was a delusion. The ministers had provided forces amounting to about forty thousand men; sufficient, as they thought, to beat down the insurrection; and they were resolved, as masters of the issue, to employ their army with unrelenting firmness. Edmund Burke did not believe that the colonies, left to themselves, could offer

any effective resistance to the whole power of England and its allies.

The friends of liberty in England had never been so desponding. The budget for the year included an additional duty on newspapers, which Lord North regarded as "a species of luxury that ought to be taxed." Debate in the house of commons brought no result; Fox, who joined calmness of temperament to sweetness of disposition, and, as his powers unfolded themselves, gave evidence of a genial sagacity that saw beyond parliamentary strife the reality of general principles, vainly struggled to keep up the courage of his political friends. A most ably written pamphlet by Richard Price, on LIBERTY, which he defined to be a government of laws made by common consent, won for its author the freedom of the city of London, and was widely circulated through the kingdom, and the continent of Europe, especially Germany. His masterly plea for America was unavailing; but his tract gained peculiar importance from his applying to the actual condition of the representation of his own country the principle on which America justified her resistance. "The time may come," said he, "when a general election in Britain will be nothing but a general auction of boroughs." Carrying the war into the heart of English politics and society, he raised the cry for the reform in parliament which was never to be hushed, and transferred English opinion to the side of America, for the sake of that liberty which was of all things dearest to the English nation. 1776. May.

But what hope was there of reform in England? Its ruling classes prepared reform by forcing independence on America. Or how could France at that time offer liberty a home? "For my part," reasoned Chastellux, "I think there can be neither durable liberty nor happiness but for nations who have representative governments." "I think so too," remarked the octogenarian Voltaire. "The right of self-administration," said Malesherbes to Louis XVI., as he threw up his ministry, "belongs to every community; it is a natural right, the right of reason. The safest council for a king is the nation itself."

Turgot, like Malesherbes, believed in the imprescriptible right of man to the free use of his powers, and wished that the executive chief should profit by the counsels of the collected wisdom of the nation; but he stood without any support in the cabinet. Courtiers, parliaments, the guilds of tradesmen, the noble proprietors of lands, opposed him; Count d'Artois, the king's brother, railed at him, as undermining the nobility, the bulwark and support of the throne; the police favored the privileged classes. One of two things must follow: Turgot must either through the king become all prevailing and establish his system, or go into private life. Maurepas, roused by jealousy, insinuated to the right-minded king that discontent pervaded France, and that it had Turgot alone for its object; that it was not best to wait for his resignation, for he might give as his reason for the act that he was hindered in the accomplishment of good. On the twelfth of May, therefore, the weak king, who had no power of holding out, dismissed him as one who was not suited to his place. For a moment the friends of the oppressed had had a beautiful and a peaceful dream; but it passed away, leaving the monarchy of France to totter, and its people to awake at the example of the western world. The new minister of finance was De Clugny; a passionate and intemperate rogue, a gamester, and a debauchee, who at once conciliated support by giving out that he would do nothing disagreeable to the farmers general of the revenue. "To what masters, ye great gods, do ye give up the universe!" exclaimed Condorcet. In parting with Malesherbes, the king discarded his truest personal friend; in Turgot, French monarchy lost its firmest support, the nobility its only possible saviour; but for America the result was very different; no one was left in the cabinet who was able to restrain the government from yielding to the rising enthusiasm for America. So tangled is the web of history! The retirement of the two men who were the apostles of liberty pushed forward the cause of human freedom, though by irregular and disorderly movements.

1776. May.

In the early part of the century, Leibnitz had found traces of the opinions of Epicurus and Spinoza in the books

that were most in vogue, and in the men of the great world who were the masters of affairs; and he foretold in consequence a general overturn in Europe. "The generous sentiment which prefers country and the general good to life," he said, "is dying out; public spirit is no more in fashion, and has lost the support of good morals and true religion; the ruling motive in the best is honor, and that is a principle which tolerates any thing but baseness, does not condemn shedding a deluge of blood from ambition or caprice, and might suffer a Herostratus or a Don Juan to pass for a hero; patriotism is mocked at, and the well-intentioned, who speak of what will become of posterity, are answered by saying that posterity may see to that. If this mental epidemic goes on increasing, Providence will correct mankind by the revolution which it must cause." 1776. May.

Wesley, who observed correctly the rapid advance of Great Britain in material prosperity, like Leibnitz predicted the approach of revolution in Europe. Men had more and more given the reins to brutal passions; and, throwing off the importunate fear of an overruling Providence, no longer knew of any thing superior to humanity, or more godlike than themselves. "What distinguishes man," said Aristotle, "is the faculty of recognising something higher and better than himself." The eighteenth century refused to look for any thing better; the belief in the divine reason was derided like the cowering at spectres and hobgoblins; and the worship of humanity became the prevailing idolatry. Art was commissioned to gratify taste; morality had for its office to increase pleasure; forgetting that the highest liberty consists in being forced by right reason to choose the best, men cherished sensualism as a system, and self-indulgence was the law of courts and aristocracies. A blind, unreasoning selfishness assumed that creative power was exhausted; that nothing was to be done but to keep things as they were; not knowing that this conception is at war with nature herself and her eternal order, men substituted for true conservatism which looks always to the action of moral forces, the basest form of atheism and the most hopeless theory of despotic power.

The age had ceased to wrestle with doubt, and accepted it not with anguish as the despair of reason, but with congratulation and pride. To renounce the search for eternal truth passed for wisdom; the notion that there can be no cognition of the immutable and the divine, the infidelity which denies the beautiful, the true, and the good, was extolled as the perfection of enlightened culture, the highest end of intellectual striving. The agony of questioning was over; men cherished no wish for any thing beyond appearances and vain show. The prevailing philosophy in its arrogance was proud of its chains. It not only derided the infinite in man, but it jeered at the thought that man can commune with the infinite. It scoffed at all knowledge that transcends the senses, limited itself to the inferior lessons of experience, and rejected ideas which are the archetypes of things for ideas which were no more than pictures on the brain; dethroning the beautiful for the agreeable; the right for the useful; the true for the seeming; knowing nothing of a universal moral government, referring every thing to the self of the individual. Hume brought this philosophy of materialism to the test, and, applying doubt to its lessons, laid bare its corruption. His profound and searching skepticism was the bier on which it was laid out in state; where all the world might come and see that it really was no more. But, while he taught the world that it led to nothingness, he taught nothing in its stead.

1776. May.

It was the same in practical life. Hume might oppose the war with America, because it threatened to mortgage all the revenues of the land in England; but, ever welcome at the Bourbon palace and acceptable to George III., he had professed to prove that tyrants should not be deposed, that the euthanasia of the British constitution would be absolutism. Skepticism puts out the eyes of inquirers, and leaves them to stumble about among tombs. It may strike down worn-out institutions into ruins, but it cannot build up a commonwealth or renovate the nations; there must be a new birth in philosophy, or all is lost in the world of reflection; in political life there is no rescue from despair but

through that inborn faith in the intelligent moral and divine government of the universe, which always survives in the masses. Away, then, with the system of impotent doubt, which teaches that Europe cannot be extricated from the defilements of a selfish aristocracy or despotism, that the British constitution, though it may have a happy death, can have no reform. Let skepticism, the wandering nomad that intrudes into every field only to desecrate and deny, strike her tents and make way for a people who have power to build up the house of humanity, because they have faith in eternal truth, and trust in that overruling foresight which brings forth better things out of evil and out of good.

The day on which George III. sealed the instructions to his commissioners, congress decided to adopt no measures for their reception until they should themselves make application to be received, and voted to raise ten millions of dollars for carrying on the war during the current year. They then took into consideration the proposition of John Adams, that "each one of the united colonies, where no government sufficient to the exigencies of their affairs had as yet been established, should adopt such government as would, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular and of America in general." This measure he had advised twelve months before, and the timid had kept it back in order still to petition and negotiate; with full knowledge of the importance of the movement, it was now resisted through two successive days, but on the tenth of May triumphed over all procrastinators. 1776, May. John Adams, Edward Rutledge, and Richard Henry Lee were then appointed to prepare a preamble to the resolution. Lee and Adams, Massachusetts and Virginia, were of one mind; and on the following Monday they made their report. Recalling the act of parliament which excluded the Americans from the protection of the crown, the king's neglect to return any answer whatever to their petition, the employment of "the whole force of the kingdom, aided by foreign mercenaries, for the destruction of the good people of these colonies," they declared that it was "absolutely

irreconcilable with reason and good conscience for the people of these colonies now to take the oaths and affirmations necessary for the support of any government under the crown of Great Britain, and that it was necessary that the exercise of every kind of authority under the crown should be totally suppressed, and all the powers of government exerted under the authority of the people of the colonies."

1776. May. These words, which bore the impress of John Adams, avowed complete independence of the British parliament, crown, and nation. It was a blow dealt by the general congress against the proprietary governments, especially that of Pennsylvania. Duane sounded the alarm; before changing the government of the colonies, he wished to wait for the opinions of the inhabitants, who were to be followed and not driven on. After causing the instructions from New York to be read, he showed that the powers conferred on him did not extend so far as to justify him in voting for the measure without a breach of trust; and yet, if the averments of the preamble should be confirmed, he pledged New York to independence. Sherman argued that the adoption of the resolution was the best way to procure the harmony with Great Britain which New York desired. Mackean, who represented Delaware, thought the step must be taken, or liberty, property, and life be lost. "The first object of New York," said Samuel Adams, "is the establishment of their rights. Our petitions are answered only by fleets, and armies, and myrmidons from abroad. The king has thrown us out of his protection; why should we support governments under his authority?" Floyd of New York was persuaded "that it could not be long before his constituents would think it necessary to take up some more stable form of government than what they then exercised; that there were little or no hopes of commissioners coming to treat of peace; and that therefore America ought to be in a situation to preserve her liberties another way." "This preamble contains a reflection upon the conduct of some people in America," interposed Wilson, referring to the assembly of Pennsylvania, which so late as February had required oaths of allegiance of Reed and Rittenhouse. If

the preamble passes," he continued, "there will be an immediate dissolution of every kind of authority in this province; the people will be instantly in a state of nature. Before we are prepared to build the new house, why should we pull down the old one?" The delegates of Pennsylvania declined to vote on the question; those of Maryland announced that, under their instructions, they should consider their colony as unrepresented, until they should receive the directions of their principals, who were then sitting at Annapolis.

Overruling the hesitation of the moderate men, the majority adopted the preamble, and ordered it to be published. The colonies never existed separately as independent states or peoples. From the first, the insurgent colonies were united colonies. As they rose, they united. 1776. May. The unity symbolized by the crown now passed to the good people of the colonies, who collectively spoke the word for totally suppressing all authority under the crown, giving the law to Pennsylvania and proscribing its proprietary government and investing all the several colonies with authority to institute governments of their own. The measure proved "a piece of mechanism to work out independence." "The Gordian knot," said John Adams, "is cut;" and, as he meditated in solitude upon the lead which he had assumed in summoning so many populous and opulent colonies to rise from the state of subjection into that of independent republics, the great events which were rapidly advancing elevated him above the weaknesses of human passions, and filled his mind with awe. Many of those who were to take part in framing constitutions for future millions turned to him for instruction. He recalled the first principles of political morals, the lessons inculcated by American experience, and the example of England. Familiar with the wise and eloquent writings of those of her sons who had treated of liberty, and combining with them the results of his own reflections, he did not shrink from offering his advice. He declared the only moral foundation of government to be the consent of the people; yet he counselled respect for existing rules, and, to avoid opening a

fruitful source of controversy, he refused to promote for the present any alteration, at least in Massachusetts, in the qualifications of voters. "There is no good government," he said, "but what is republican; for a republic is an empire of laws, and not of men;" and, to constitute the best of republics, he enforced the necessity of separating the executive, legislative, and judicial powers. The ill use which the royal governors had made of the veto power did not confuse his judgment; he upheld the principle that the chief executive magistrate ought to be invested with a negative upon the legislature. To judges he wished to assign commissions during good behavior, and to establish their salaries by law, but to make them liable to impeachment and removal by the grand inquest of the colony.

1776. May.

The republics of the ancient world had grown out of cities, so that their governments were originally municipalities; to make a republic possible in the large territories embraced in the several American colonies, where the whole society could never be assembled, power was to be deputed by the many to a few, who were to be elected by suffrage, and were in theory to be a faithful miniature portrait of the people. Nor yet should all power be intrusted to one representative assembly. The advocates of a perfect unity in government favored the concentration of power in one body, for the sake of an unobstructed exercise of the popular will; but John Adams taught, what an analysis of the human mind and the examples of history through thousands of years unite to confirm, that a single assembly is liable to the frailties of a single individual, to passionate caprices, and to a selfish eagerness for the increase of its own importance. "If the legislative power," such were his words just as the American constitutions were forming, "if the legislative power is wholly in one assembly, and the executive in another or in a single person, these two powers will oppose and encroach upon each other, until the contest shall end in war, and the whole power, legislative and executive, be usurped by the strongest."

These are words to be inscribed on the memory and

hearts of every nation that would constitute a republic; yet at that time there was not one member of the continental congress who applied the principle to the continental congress itself. Hawley, of Northampton, had advised an American parliament with two houses of legislature; but John Adams saw no occasion for any continental constitution except a congress which should contain a fair representation of the colonies, and confine its authority sacredly to war, trade, disputes between colony and colony, the post-office, and the unappropriated public lands.

In the separate colonies, he urged that all the youth should be liberally educated, and all men be required to keep arms and to be trained to their use. A country having a constitution founded on these principles, diffusing knowledge among the people, and inspiring them with the conscious dignity becoming free men, would, "when compared with the regions of monarchical or aristocratical domination, seem an Arcadia or an Elysium." 1776. May.

During these discussions, James Mugford, a Marblehead sea-captain, in a continental cruiser of but fifty tons and four guns, on the seventeenth of May captured and brought into Boston harbor the British ship "Hope," which had on board fifteen hundred barrels of powder. This cargo made her the most valuable prize that had been taken. Two days later, the gallant officer prepared to go out again. At Nantasket he was attacked by thirteen boats from a British man-of-war; they suffered great loss and were beaten off, while none of the Americans was hurt except Mugford, who fought heroically, and was mortally wounded.

CHAPTER LXIV.

VIRGINIA PROCLAIMS THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

MAY, JUNE, 1776.

ON the sixth of May, forty-five members of the house of burgesses of Virginia met at the capitol in Williams-
1776. May. burg pursuant to their adjournment; but, as they were of the opinion that the ancient constitution had been subverted by the king and parliament of Great Britain, they dissolved themselves unanimously, and thus the last vestige of the king's authority passed away.

The delegates of Virginia, who on the same morning assembled in convention not less than one hundred and thirty in number, were a constituent and an executive assembly. They represented the oldest and the largest colony, whose institutions had been fashioned on the model recommended by Bacon, and whose inhabitants for nearly a hundred and seventy years had been eminently loyal, and had sustained the church of England as the establishment of the land.

Its people, having in their origin a perceptible but never an exclusive influence of the Cavaliers, had sprung mainly from adventurers, who were not fugitives for conscience' sake, or sufferers from persecution, or passionate partisans of monarchy. The population had been recruited by successive infusions of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians; Huguenots, and the descendants of Huguenots; men who had been so attached to Cromwell or to the republic that they preferred to emigrate on the return of Charles II.; Baptists and other dissenters; and in the valley of Virginia there was a very large German population. Beside all these, there was the great body of the backwoodsmen, rovers from

Maryland and Pennsylvania, not caring much for the record of their lineage.

The territory for which the convention was to act was not a limited one like that of Sparta or Attica: beginning at the ocean, it comprised the great Bay of the Chesapeake, with its central and southern tributaries; the beautiful valleys on the head-springs of the Roanoke and along the whole course of the Shenandoah; the country beyond the mountains, including the sources of the Monongahela and the Cumberland Rivers, and extending indefinitely to the Tennessee and beyond it. Nor that only: Virginia insisted that its jurisdiction stretched without bounds over all the country west and north-west of a line two hundred miles north of Old Point Comfort, not granted to others by royal charters; and there was no one to dispute a large part of this claim except the province of Quebec under an act of parliament which the continental congress had annulled. For all this wide expanse, rich in soil, precious minerals, healing springs, forests, convenient marts for foreign commerce, the great pathways to the west, more fertile, more spacious than all Greece, Italy, and Great Britain, than any region for which it had ever been proposed to establish republican liberty, a constitution was to be framed.

1776. May. It has been discussed, whether the spirit that now prevailed was derived from Cavaliers, and whether it sprung from the inhabitants on tide-water or was due to those of the uplands; the answer is plain: the movement in Virginia proceeded from the heart of Virginia herself, and represented the magnanimity of her own people. It did not spring, it could not spring, from sentiments generated by the by-gone loyalty to the Stuarts. The Ancient Dominion had with entire unanimity approved the change of dynasty of 1688; with equal unanimity, had, even more readily than the English, accepted the house of Hanover, and had been one of the most loyal parts of the empire of the Georges; the revolution was due to a keen sentiment of wrong and outrage, and was joined in with a oneness of spirit, which asked no questions about ancestry, or traditional affinities, or religious creed, or nearness to the sea or to the moun-

tains. The story of the war commemorates the courage of the men of the interior; among the "inexorable families," Dunmore especially reported from the low country the Lees, and the whole family of Cary of Hampton, of whom even the sisters, married to a Fairfax and a Nicholas, cheered on their connections to unrelenting opposition. Virginia rose with as much unanimity as Connecticut or Massachusetts, and with a more commanding resolution.

1776. May. The purpose for which the convention was assembled appears from the words of the county of Buckingham to Charles Patterson and John Cabell, its delegates: "We instruct you to cause a total and final separation from Great Britain to take place as soon as possible; and a constitution to be established, with a full representation, and free and frequent elections. As America is the last country of the world which has contended for her liberty, so she may be the most free and happy; taking advantage of her situation and strength, and having the experience of all before to profit by. The supreme Being hath left it in our power to choose what government we please for our civil and religious happiness: good government and the prosperity of mankind can alone be in the divine intention; we pray therefore that, under the superintending providence of the Ruler of the universe, a government may be established in America, the most free, happy, and permanent that human wisdom can contrive and the perfection of man maintain."

The county of Augusta represented the necessity of making the confederacy of the united colonies most perfect, independent, and lasting; and of framing an equal, free, and liberal government, that might bear the test of all future ages. A petition was sent from the inhabitants of Transylvania, declaring that they were anxious to concur with their brethren of the united colonies in every measure for the recovery of their rights and liberties.

The inhabitants on the rivers Watauga and Holston set forth that "they were deeply impressed with a sense of the distresses of their American brethren, and would, when called upon, with their lives and fortunes, lend them every assistance in their power; that they begged to be consid-

ered as a part of the colony, and would readily embrace every opportunity of obeying any commands from the convention."

To that body were chosen more than one hundred and thirty of the ablest and most weighty men of Virginia. Among them were no rash enthusiasts for liberty; no lovers of revolution for the sake of change; no ambitious demagogues hoping for advancement by the overthrow of existing institutions; they were the choice of the freeholders of Virginia, and the majority were men of independent fortune, or even opulence. It was afterwards remembered that of this grave assembly the members were for the most part men of large stature and robust frames, and that a very great proportion of them lived to exceeding old age. They were now to decide whether Virginia demanded independence, and, if so, they were to establish a commonwealth; and, in making this decision, they moved like a pillar of fire in front of the whole country. 1776. May.

When the delegates had assembled and appointed a clerk, Richard Bland recommended Edmund Pendleton to be chosen president, and was seconded by Archibald Cary; while Thomas Johnson of Louisa, and Bartholomew Dandridge, proposed Thomas Ludwell Lee. For a moment there was something like an array of parties, but it instantly subsided; Virginia showed her greatness by her moderation, and gave to the world new evidence that the revolution sprung from necessity, by placing in the chair Pendleton, the most cautious and conservative among her patriots. After his election, he wrote to a friend: "Of all others, I own I prefer the true English constitution, which consists of a proper combination of the principles of honor, virtue, and fear."

The convention, after having been employed for some days on current business, resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the state of the colony; and on the fifteenth Archibald Cary reported resolutions which had been drafted by Pendleton, offered by Nelson, and enforced by Henry. They were then twice read at the clerk's table, and, one hundred and twelve members being present, were

unanimously agreed to. The preamble enumerated their chief grievances; among others, that the king's representative in the colony was training and employing slaves against their masters; and they say: "We have no alternative left but an abject submission or a total separation;" therefore they went on to decree, "that their delegates in congress be instructed to propose to that body to declare the united colonies free and independent states, absolved from all allegiance or dependence upon the crown or parliament of Great Britain; and that they give the assent of this colony to such declaration, and to measures for forming foreign alliances and a confederation of the colonies: provided that the power of forming government for, and the regulation of the internal concerns of, each colony, be left to the respective colonial legislatures.

1776. May. This resolution was received out of doors with chimes of bells and the noise of artillery; and the British flag, which had thus far kept its place on the state-house, was struck, to be raised no more.

In the following days, a committee of thirty-two was appointed to prepare a declaration of rights and a plan of government. Among the members were Archibald Cary; Patrick Henry, first of all in boldly maintaining the spirit of the resolution and in influence over the members from the upper counties; the aged Richard Bland; Edmund Randolph, son of the attorney-general, who was then a refugee in England; Nicholas; James Madison, the youthful delegate from Orange county; but the one who at that moment held most sway over the mind of the convention was George Mason, the successor of Washington in the representation of Fairfax county. He was a devoted member of the church of England; and by his own account of himself, which is still preserved, "though not born within the verge of the British isle, he had been an Englishman in his principles, a zealous assertor of the act of settlement, firmly attached to the royal family upon the throne, well affected to the king personally and to his government, in defence of which he would have shed the last drop of his blood; one who adored the wisdom and happiness of the British constitution, and

preferred it to any that then existed or had ever existed." For ten years he claimed nothing for his countrymen beyond the liberty and privileges of Englishmen, in the same degree as if they had still continued among their brethren in Great Britain; but he said: "The ancient poets, in their elegant manner of expression, have made a kind of being of Necessity, and tell us that the gods themselves are obliged to yield to her;" and he left the private life that he loved, to assist in the rescue of his country from the excesses of arbitrary power to which a seeming fatality had driven the British ministers. He was a good speaker and an able debater, the more eloquent now for being touched with sorrow; but his great strength lay in his sincerity, which made him wise and bold, modest and unchanging, while it overawed his hearers. He was severe, but his severity was humane, with no tinge of bitterness, though he had a scorn for every thing mean, cowardly, or low; and he always spoke out his convictions with frank directness. He had been truly loyal; on renouncing his king, he could stand justified to his own conscience only by an unselfish attachment to human freedom. 1776. May.

On the twenty-seventh of May, Cary from the committee presented to the convention the declaration of rights, which Mason had drafted. For the next fortnight the great truths which it proclaimed, and which were to form the groundwork of American institutions, employed the thoughts of the convention, and during several successive days were the subject of solemn deliberation. One clause only received a material amendment. Mason had written that all should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion. But toleration is the demand of the skeptic, who has no fixed belief, and only wishes to be let alone; a firm faith, which is too easily tempted to establish itself exclusively, can be content with nothing less than equality. A young man, then unknown to fame, of a bright hazel eye inclining to gray, small in stature, light in person, delicate in appearance, looking like a pallid, sickly scholar among the robust men with whom he was associated, proposed an amendment. He was James Madison, the son of an Orange county

planter, bred in the school of Presbyterian dissenters under Witherspoon at Princeton, trained by his own studies, by meditative rural life in the Old Dominion, by an ingenuous indignation at the persecutions of the Baptists, by the innate principles of right, to uphold the sanctity of religious freedom. He objected to the word "toleration," because it implied an established religion, which endured dissent only as a condescension; and, as the earnestness of his convictions overcame his modesty, he went on to demonstrate that "all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience." His motion, which did but state with better dialectics the very purpose which Mason wished to accomplish, obtained the suffrages of his colleagues. This was the first achievement of the wisest civilian of Virginia. The declaration, having then been fairly transcribed, was on the twelfth of June read a third time, and unanimously adopted by the representatives of the good people of Virginia, assembled in full and free convention.

1776. June.

These are the rights which they said do pertain to them and their posterity, as the basis and foundation of government: "All men are by nature equally free, and have inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

"All power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the people; magistrates are their trustees and servants, and at all times amenable to them.

"Government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit and security of the people, nation, or community; and, whenever any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community hath an indubitable, unalienable, and indefeasible right to reform, alter, or abolish it, in such a manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal.

"Public services not being descendible, neither ought the offices of magistrate, legislator, or judge to be hereditary.

"The legislative and executive powers of the state should be separate and distinct from the judicative; the members of the two first should, at fixed periods, return into that body from which they were originally taken, and the vacancies be supplied by frequent, certain, and regular elections. 1776. June.

"Elections of members to serve as representatives of the people in assembly ought to be free; and all men, having sufficient evidence of permanent common interest with, and attachment to, the community, have the right of suffrage, and cannot be taxed or deprived of their property for public uses without their own consent or that of their representative so elected, nor bound by any law to which they have not, in like manner, assented for the public good.

"There ought to be no arbitrary power of suspending laws, no requirement of excessive bail, no granting of general warrants.

"No man ought to be deprived of liberty, except by the law of the land or the judgment of his peers; and the ancient trial by jury ought to be held sacred.

"The freedom of the press is one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty, and can never be restrained but by despotic governments.

"A well-regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defence of a free state; standing armies in time of peace should be avoided as dangerous to liberty; and in all cases the military should be under strict subordination to the civil power.

"The people have a right to uniform government; and therefore no government separate from or independent of the government of Virginia ought to be erected or established within the limits thereof.

"No free government can be preserved but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue, and by frequent recurrence to fundamental principles.

"Religion can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and, therefore, all men are equally

entitled to the free exercise of it, according to the dictates of conscience; and it is the mutual duty of all to practise Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other."

Other colonies had framed bills of rights in reference to their relations with Britain; Virginia moved from charters and customs to primal principles; from a narrow altercation about facts to the contemplation of immutable truth. She summoned the eternal laws of man's being to protest against all tyranny. The English petition of right in 1688 was historic and retrospective; the Virginia declaration came out of the heart of nature, and announced governing principles for all peoples in all future times. It was the voice of reason going forth to speak a new political world into being. At the bar of humanity Virginia gave the name and fame of her sons as hostages that her public life should show a likeness to the highest ideas of right and equal freedom among men.

1776. June.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE VIRGINIA PROPOSITION OF INDEPENDENCE.

MAY, JUNE, 1776.

WHILE Virginia communicated to her sister colonies her instruction to her delegates in congress to propose independence, Washington at New York freely and repeatedly delivered his opinion: "A reconciliation with Great Britain is impracticable, and would be in the highest degree detrimental to the true interest of America; when I first took the command of the army, I abhorred the idea of independence; but I am now fully convinced that nothing else will save us." The preamble and the resolve of congress, adopted at Philadelphia on the same day with the Virginia instructions at Williamsburg, were in themselves the act of a self-determining political body. The blow which proceeded from the general congress felled the proprietary authority in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Maryland, more happy than her neighbor, kept her ranks unbroken; for she had intrusted the direction of the revolution to a convention whose decrees were received as indisputably the voice of her whole people. She had dispensed with oaths for the support of the government under the crown; but she resolved that it was not necessary to suppress totally the exercise of every kind of office derived from the king; and in her new instructions to her delegates in congress she mixed with her pledges of support to the common cause the lingering wish for a reunion with Great Britain. Meanwhile, the governor was required to leave the province; and the only powers actually in being were the deputies in congress, the council of safety, and the convention. 1776. May.

In Pennsylvania, the preamble, which was published on

the morning of the sixteenth, was cited by the popular party as a dissolution of the proprietary government, and a direction to institute a new one under the authority of the people. On the next day, which was kept as a national fast, George Duffield, the minister of the third Presbyterian church in Philadelphia, with John Adams for a listener, drew a parallel between George III. and Pharaoh, and inferred that the same providence of God which had rescued the Israelites intended to free the Americans. On the twenty-fourth, a town-meeting of more than four thousand men was held in the state-house yard, to confront the instructions of the assembly against independence with the vote of the continental congress against "oaths of allegiance and the exercise of any kind of authority under the crown." It was called to order by John Bayard, the chairman of the committee of inspection for the county of Philadelphia, a patriot of singular purity of character and disinterestedness, personally brave, pensive, earnest, and devout; it selected for its president Daniel Roberdeau; and it voted unanimously, that the instructions withdrew the province from the happy union with the other colonies; that the present assembly was not elected for the purpose of forming a new government; and, with but one dissentient voice, it further voted, that the house of assembly, not having the authority of the people for that purpose, could not, without usurpation, proceed to form a new government. As a consequence, the committee of the city and liberties of Philadelphia was directed to summon a conference of the committees of every county in the province, to make arrangements for a constituent convention, which should be chosen by the people.

1776. May.

Thus was prepared the fall of the proprietary charter of Pennsylvania. Any agreement which the governor would accept could be no better than a collusion, for by the very nature of his office and his interests he could not stand out against the British ministry, however much they might be in the wrong. The members of the assembly, by taking the oath or affirmation of allegiance, had plainly incapacitated themselves for reforming the government. Besides,

the resolve in congress, which dispensed in all cases with that oath, was interpreted as conferring the rights of electors on the Germans who had not yet been naturalized; so that the assembly appeared now to represent not the people, but a wrongfully limited governing class.

It was unhappy for the colony that Dickinson and his friends refused to lead the popular movement for a convention; and at a later day he owned "the National Council," as he styled congress, "to have been right." His persistent opposition left the principle of independence in Pennsylvania to be established by a political party, springing spontaneously from the ranks of the people, struggling against an active social influence, a numerous religious organization, and the traditional governing classes, and rending society by angry and long unreconcilable discord.

The assembly stood adjourned to the twentieth; on the morning of the twenty-second, a quorum appeared, and, as a first concession to the continental congress, the newly elected members were not required to swear allegiance to the king. The protest of the inhabitants of the city and liberties against their powers to carry the resolve of congress into execution was presented, read, and laid on the table; but no other notice was taken of it. The resolve itself was set aside by the appointment of a committee to ask of the continental congress an explanation of its purpose. The proposal to naturalize foreigners without requiring oaths of allegiance to the king was, in like manner, put to sleep by a reference to a committee, composed of those who had most earnestly contested the wishes of the Germans. The assembly seemed to have no purpose, unless to gain time and wait. The constitution was the watchword of the conservative members, union that of the revolutionists; and they condemned the conduct of the assembly as a withdrawal from the union. One party represented old established interests, another saw no hope but from independence and a firm confederation; between these two stood Dickinson, whose central position was the hiding-place of the irresolute. 1776. May.

On the twenty-third, an address, claiming to proceed

from the committee of inspection for the county of Philadelphia, and bearing the name of William Hamilton as chairman, asked the assembly to "adhere religiously to its instructions against independence, and to oppose altering the least part of their invaluable constitution." The next day, the committee of inspection of the city of Philadelphia came together with Mackean as chairman, and addressed a memorial to the continental congress, setting forth that the assembly did not possess the confidence of the people, nor truly represent the province; that among its members were men who held offices under the crown of Great Britain, and who had been dragged into compliance with most of the recommendations of congress only from the fear of being superseded by a convention; that measures for assembling a convention of the people had now been taken by men whose constituents were fighting men, determined to support the union of the province with the other colonies at every hazard.

1776. June. The members of the assembly became uneasy: in the first days of June, no quorum appeared; on the fifth, the proceedings of Virginia, directing her delegates to propose independence, were read in the house. No answer was returned; but a petition from Cumberland county, asking that the instructions to the delegates of Pennsylvania might be withdrawn, was read a second time, and a committee of seven was appointed to bring in new instructions. Of its members, among whom were Dickinson, Morris, Reed, Clymer, and one or two loyalists, all but Clymer were, for the present, opposed to independence.

The instructions of Pennsylvania, which they reported on the sixth, conceded that the revolutionists were in the right; "that all hopes of a reconciliation, on reasonable terms, were extinguished;" and nevertheless, with a full knowledge that the king would not yield, they expressed their ardent desire for an end of the civil war; while they expressly sanctioned a confederation, and "treaties with foreign kingdoms and states," they neither advised nor forbade a declaration of independence, trusting to "the ability, prudence, and integrity" of their delegates. Now the

opinion of the majority of those delegates was notorious; but to remove even a possibility of uncertainty, on the seventh of June, before the question on the new instructions was taken, Dickinson, in the assembly, made a speech, in which he pledged his word to the proprietary chief justice of the province, and to the whole house, that he and the majority of the delegates would continue to vote against independence.

On that same day, and perhaps while Dickinson was speaking in the Pennsylvania assembly, Richard Henry Lee, in the name and with the authority of Virginia, proposed in congress: "That these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; that it is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign alliances; and that a plan of confederation be prepared, and transmitted to the respective colonies for their consideration and approbation." The resolutions were seconded by John Adams; and "the members were enjoined to attend punctually the next day at ten o'clock, in order to take them into their consideration." 1776. June.

At nine in the morning of the eighth of June, the assembly of Pennsylvania, after debate, adopted its new instructions, by a vote of thirty-one against twelve. The disingenuous measure proved the end of that body; once only did it again bring together a quorum of its members. The moderate and the timid, lending their aid to the proprietary party, had put themselves in the wrong both theoretically and practically; at once conceding the impossibility of reconciliation, and, by their indecision, entailing on Pennsylvania years of distraction and bitter strife.

At ten on the same day, congress took up Richard Henry Lee's resolve, and the debate which ensued was the most copious and the most animated ever held on the subject. The argument on the part of its opponents was sustained by Robert Livingston of New York, by Wilson, Dickinson, and Edward Rutledge. They made no objection to a con-

federacy, and to sending a project of a treaty by proper persons to France; but they contended that a declaration of independence would place America in the power of the British, with whom she was to negotiate; give her enemy notice to counteract her intentions before she had taken steps to carry them into execution; and expose her to ridicule in the eyes of foreign powers by prematurely attempting to bring them into an alliance. Edward Rutledge said privately, "that it required the impudence of a New Englander, for them in their disjointed state to propose a treaty to a nation now at peace; that no reason could be assigned for pressing into this measure but the reason of every madman, a show of spirit." Wilson avowed that the removal of the restriction on his vote by the Pennsylvania assembly on that morning did not change his view of his obligation to resist independence. On the other hand, Lee and Wythe of Virginia put forth all their strength to show that the people waited only for congress to lead the way; that they desired an immediate declaration of independence without which no European power could give shelter to their commerce or engage with them in a treaty of alliance. John Adams defended the proposed measures as "objects of the most stupendous magnitude, in which the lives and liberties of millions yet unborn were intimately interested;" as the consummation "of a revolution, the most complete, unexpected, and remarkable of any in the history of nations." The voices of all New England and of Georgia were raised on the same side; and the discussion was kept up till seven in the evening. A majority of the colonies, including North Carolina, appeared to be unalterably fixed in favor of an immediate declaration of independence; but the vote on the question was postponed till Monday.

1776. June.

On the intervening day, Keith, the British minister at the court of Vienna, chanced to obtain an audience of Joseph II. and afterwards of the empress Maria Theresa. The emperor referred to the proclamation which the joint sovereigns had issued, most strictly prohibiting all commerce between their subjects in the Low Countries and the

rebel colonies in America, and went on to say: "I am very sorry for the difficulties which have arisen to distress the king's government; the cause in which he is engaged is in fact the cause of all sovereigns, for they have a joint interest in the maintenance of a just subordination and obedience to law, in all the monarchies which surround them; I see with pleasure the vigorous exertions of the national strength, which he is now employing to bring his rebellious subjects to a speedy submission, and I most sincerely wish success to those measures." The empress queen, in her turn, expressed a very hearty desire for the restoration of obedience and tranquillity to every quarter of the British dominions. 1776. June.

When the congress met on Monday, Edward Rutledge, without much expectation of success, moved that the question should be postponed three weeks, while in the mean time the plan of a confederation and of treaties might be matured. The debate on his motion was kept up until seven in the evening; when the desire of perfect unanimity, and the reasonableness of allowing the delegates of the central colonies to consult their constituents, induced seven colonies against five to assent to the delay, but with the further condition that, to prevent any loss of time, a committee should in the mean while prepare a declaration in harmony with the proposed resolution. On the next day, Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston were chosen by ballot for that office; and it fell to Jefferson to write it, both because he represented Virginia, from which the proposition had gone forth, and because he had been elected by the largest number of votes.

On the twelfth, the duty of digesting the form of a confederation was assigned to one member from each colony; and, as if the subject had not been of transcendent importance, their appointment was left to the presiding officer. Among those whom Hancock selected are found the names of Samuel Adams, Dickinson, and Edward Rutledge; it could have been wished that the two Adamses had changed places, though probably the result would at that time have been the same; no one man had done so much to bring

about independence as the elder Adams, but his skill in constructing governments, not his knowledge of the principles of freedom, was less remarkable than that of his younger kinsman. In the committee, Dickinson, who, as an opponent of independence, could promote only a temporary constitution, assumed the task of drafting the great charter of union.

1776. June.

The preparation of a plan of treaties with foreign powers was intrusted by ballot to Dickinson, Franklin, John Adams, Harrison, and Robert Morris; and between John Adams and Dickinson there was no difference of opinion, that the scheme to be proposed should be confined to commerce, without any grant of exclusive privileges, and without any entanglement of a political connection or alliance.

On the fourteenth, a board of war, of which Washington had explained the extreme necessity, was appointed, and John Adams was placed at its head.

On the twenty-fourth, congress "resolved, that all persons abiding within any of the united colonies, and deriving protection from its laws, owe allegiance to the said laws, and are members of such colony;" and it charged the guilt of treason upon "all members of any of the united colonies who should be adherent to the king of Great Britain, giving to him aid and comfort." The fellow-subjects of one king became fellow-lieges of one republic. They all had one law of citizenship and one law of treason.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE BATTLE OF FORT MOULTRIE.

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH OF JUNE, 1776.

THE peace of Charleston was undisturbed except by gathering rumors, that the English fleet and transports destined for its attack had arrived in Cape Fear River. Its citizens, taking courage from the efficiency and wisdom with which the independent government of the colony was administered, toiled continually in the trenches; and bands of negroes from the neighboring plantations were put upon the works. The bloom of the magnolia was yellowing, when, on the first day of June, expresses from Christ Church parish brought news to the president that a fleet of forty or fifty sail lay anchored about twenty miles to the north of Charleston bar. 1776. June.

Rutledge ordered the alarm to be fired; and, while the townsmen were looking out for horses, carriages, or boats to remove their wives and children, he hastened down the militia from the country by expresses, and in company with Armstrong visited all the fortifications. Barricades were thrown up across the principal streets; defences were raised at the points most likely to be selected for landing; lead, gleaned from the weights of church and dwelling-house windows, was cast into musket-balls; and a respectable force of men was concentred at the capitol.

The invaders of South Carolina had come only upon the most positive assurances that the friends of the British government in the province would rise at the bare appearance of a military force. At a moment when instant action was essential to their success, they were perplexed by uncertainty of counsel between Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, the respective commanders of the army and the naval force.

On the seventh, when Clinton would have sent on shore a proclamation by a flag of truce, his boat was fired upon by an ignorant sentinel; but the next day Moultrie cleared up the mistake through one of his officers, and received the proclamation, in which the British general declared the existence of "a most unprovoked and wicked rebellion within South Carolina," the "succession of crimes of its inhabitants," the tyranny of its congress and committees, the error, thus far incorrigible, of an "infatuated and misguided multitude," the duty of "proceeding forthwith against all bodies of men in arms, congresses, and committees, as open enemies of the state;" but "from humanity" he consented "to forewarn the deluded people," and to offer in his majesty's name "free pardon to such as should lay down their arms and submit to the laws." Having done this, he consulted Cornwallis on the best means of gaining possession of Sullivan's Island; and both agreed that they could not more effectually co-operate with the intended movement of the fleet than by landing on Long Island, which was represented to communicate with Sullivan's Island at low water by a ford, and with the main by a channel navigable for boats of draft. Clinton had had four days' time to sound the ford; but he took the story of its depth on trust.

1776. June.

On the morning of the ninth of June, Charles Lee, attended by his aides-de-camp, and by Robert Howe of North Carolina, arrived at Haddrell's Point. After examining its fortifications, he crossed over to Sullivan's Island, where he found a good stock of powder; a fort, of which the front and one side were finished; and twelve hundred men encamped in its rear in booths that were roofed with palmetto leaves. Within the fort, numerous mechanics and laborers were lifting and fitting heavy palmetto logs for its walls. He had scarce glanced at the work, when he declared that "he did not like that post at all; it could not hold out half an hour, and there was no way to retreat;" it was but a "slaughter pen," and the garrison would be sacrificed. On his way up to Charleston, Lee touched at James Island, where Gadsden had the command.

The battalions raised in South Carolina were not as yet placed upon the continental establishment; and, although congress bore the proportionate expense, the disposition of the force still remained under the direction of the president of the colony and its officers. This circumstance became now of the greatest importance. To Armstrong no command whatever had been conceded: but Lee was the second officer in the American army; his military fame was at that time very great; he had ordered battalions from North Carolina and Virginia; his presence was a pledge of the sympathy of the continent; and on his arrival he was invested with the military command through an order from Rutledge. 1776. June.

On that same day Clinton began his disembarkation, landing four or five hundred men on Long Island. It was therefore evident that the first attack was to be made not on the city, but its outpost; yet Lee proposed to Rutledge to withdraw from Sullivan's Island, without a blow. Had he acted in concert with the invaders, he could not have more completely promoted their design. But Rutledge, interposing his authority, would not suffer it, and Lee did not venture to proceed alone; yet on the tenth his very first order to Moultrie, except one which was revoked as soon as issued, directed that officer to construct bridges for his retreat, and the order was repeated and enforced several times that day, and on almost every succeeding one. Happily Moultrie's courage was of that placid kind that could not be made anxious or uneasy; he weighed carefully his danger and his resources; with quiet, imperturbable confidence, formed his plan for repelling the impending double attack of the enemy by sea and by land; and never so much as imagined that he could be driven from his post.

On the tenth, while the continental congress was finishing the debate on independence, the "Bristol," whose guns had been previously taken out, came over the bar, attended by thirty or forty vessels, and anchored at about three miles from Fort Sullivan. In Charleston, from which this movement was distinctly visible, all was action; on the wharfs, warehouses of great value were thrown down to give room

for the fire of cannon and musketry from the lines along East Bay; intrenchments surrounded the town; the barricades, raised in the principal streets, were continued to the water; and arrow-headed embankments were projected upon the landing-places. Negroes from the country took part in the labor; the hoe and the spade were in every citizen's hands; all persons, without distinction, "labored with alacrity." Neither sun nor rain interrupted their toil.

On the eleventh, the two regiments from North Carolina arrived. That same day, Lee, being told that a bridge of retreat from Sullivan's Island to Haddrell's Point was impossible, and not being permitted by Rutledge to direct the total evacuation of the island, ordered Moultrie immediately to send four hundred of his men over to the continent; in his postscript, he added: "Make up the detachment to five hundred." On the thirteenth, he writes: "You will detach another hundred of men," to strengthen the corps on the other side of the creek. But the spirit of South Carolina had sympathy with Moultrie, and mechanics and negro laborers were sent down to complete his fort; yet, hard as they toiled, it was not nearly finished before the action. On the twelfth, the wind blew so violently that two ships which lay outside of the bar were obliged for safety to stand out to sea, and this assisted to postpone the attack.

1776. June.

On the fifteenth, Lee stationed Armstrong at Haddrell's Point; and the brave Pennsylvanian, as the superior officer, ever manifested for Moultrie a hearty friendship. On that same day, Sir Peter Parker gave to the captains of his squadron his arrangement for taking the batteries on Sullivan's Island; and on the sixteenth he communicated it to Clinton, who did not know what to do. The dilatory conduct of the British betrayed hesitation and unharmonious councils; and the Carolinians made such use of the consequent delay that by the seventeenth they were in an exceedingly good state of preparation at every outpost and also in town. But Clinton intended only to occupy and garrison Sullivan's Island. For that end, consulting with Cornwallis, he completed the landing of all his men on Long

Island, a naked sand, where nothing grew except a few bushes, that harbored myriads of mosquitoes, and where the troops suffered intensely from the burning sun, the want of good water, and the bad quality and insufficient supply of provisions. A trial of the ford was made: Clinton himself waded in up to his neck; so did others of his officers; and, on the day on which he succeeded in getting all his men on shore, he announced, through Vaughan to Sir Peter Parker, that no ford was to be found; that there remained a depth of seven feet of water at low tide; and that therefore the troops could not take the share they expected in the intended attack. His six full regiments, and companies enough from others to make up one more, a body of more than three thousand men, thoroughly provided with arms, artillery, and ammunition, had left the transports for a naked sand-bank, that was to them a prison. Compelled to propose something, Clinton fixed on the twenty-third for the joint attack; but it was hindered on that day by an unfavorable wind.

In the following night, Muhlenberg's regiment arrived. On receiving Lee's orders, they had instantly set off from Virginia and marched to Charleston, without tents, continually exposed to the weather. The companies were composed chiefly of Muhlenberg's old German parishioners; and, of all the Virginia regiments, this was the most complete, the best armed, best clothed, and best equipped for immediate service. The Americans were now very strong. 1776. June.

The confidence of Sir Peter Parker in an easy victory was unshaken. To make all sure, he exercised a body of marines and seamen in the art of entering forts through embrasures; intending first to silence Moultrie's battery, then to land his practised detachment, and by their aid enter the fort. His presumption was justified by the judgment of Lee. That general, coming down to the island, took Moultrie aside and said: "Do you think you can maintain this post?" Moultrie answered: "Yes, I think I can." But Lee had no faith in a spirited defence, fretted at Moultrie's too easy disposition, and wished, up to the last moment, to remove him from the command.

On the twenty-fifth the squadron was increased by the arrival of the "Experiment," a ship of sixty guns, which passed the bar on the twenty-sixth. Letters of encouragement came also from Tonyn, then governor of East Florida, who was impatient for an attack on Georgia; he would have had a body of Indians raised on the back of South Carolina, and a body of royalists to "terrify and distract, so that the assault at Charleston would have struck an astonishing terror and affright." He reported South Carolina to be in "a mutinous state that delighted him;" "the men would certainly rise on their officers; the battery on Sullivan's Island would not discharge two rounds." This opinion was spread through the fleet, and became the belief of every sailor on board. With or without Clinton's aid, the commodore was persuaded that his well-drilled seamen and marines could take and keep possession of the fort, till Clinton should "send as many troops as he might think proper, who might enter the fort in the same way."

One day, Captain Lemprière, the same who in the former year had, with daring enterprise, taken more than a hundred barrels of powder from a vessel at anchor off St. Augustine, was walking with Moultrie on the platform, and, looking at the British ships-of-war, all of which had already come over the bar, addressed him: "Well, colonel, what do you think of it now?" "We shall beat them," said Moultrie. "The men-of-war," rejoined the captain, "will knock your fort down in half an hour." "Then," said Moultrie, "we will lie behind the ruins, and prevent their men from landing."

1776. June 28. On the morning of the twenty-eighth a gentle sea-breeze prognosticated the attack. Lee, from Charleston, for the tenth or eleventh time, charged Moultrie to finish the bridge for his retreat, promised him re-enforcements, which were never sent, and still meditated removing him from his command; while Moultrie, whose faculties, under the outward show of indolent calm, were strained to their utmost tension, rode to visit his advanced guard on the east. Here the commander, William Thomson, of Orangeburg, of Irish descent, a native of Pennsylvania, but from childhood a citizen of South Carolina, a man of rare

worth in private life, brave and intelligent as an officer, had, at the extreme point, posted fifty of the militia behind sand-hills and myrtle bushes. A few hundred yards in the rear, breastworks had been thrown up, which he guarded with three hundred riflemen of his own regiment from Orangeburg and its neighborhood, with two hundred of Clark's North Carolina regiment, two hundred more of the men of South Carolina under Horry, and the raccoon company of riflemen. On his left, he was protected by a morass; on his right, by one eighteen pounder and one brass six pounder, which overlooked the spot where Clinton would wish to land. 1776. June 28.

Seeing the enemy's boats in motion on the beach of Long Island, and the men-of-war loosing their topsails, Moultrie hurried back to his fort. He ordered the long roll to beat, and officers and men to their posts. His whole number, including himself and officers, was four hundred and thirty-five; of whom twenty-two were of the artillery, the rest of his own regiment; men who were bound to each other, to their officers, and to him, by personal affection and confidence. Next to him in command was Isaac Motte; his major was the fearless and faultless Francis Marion. The fort was a square, with a bastion at each angle; built of palmetto logs, dovetailed and bolted together, and laid in parallel rows sixteen feet asunder, with sand filled in between the rows. On the eastern and northern sides the palmetto wall was only seven feet high, but it was surmounted by thick plank, so as to be tenable against a scaling party; a traverse of sand extended from east to west. The southern and western curtains were finished with their platforms, on which cannon were mounted. The standard, which was advanced to the south-east bastion, displayed a flag of blue with a white crescent, on which was emblazoned Liberty. The whole number of cannon in the fort, bastions, and the two cavaliers, was but thirty-one, of which no more than twenty-one could at the same time be brought into use; of ammunition there were but twenty-eight rounds for twenty-six cannon. At Haddrell's Point, across the bay, Armstrong had about fifteen hundred men. The first

regular South Carolina regiment, under Christopher Gadsden, occupied Fort Johnson, which stood on the most northerly part of James Island, about three miles from Charleston, and within point-blank shot of the channel. The city was protected by more than two thousand men.

Half an hour after nine in the morning, the commodore gave signal to Clinton that he should go on the attack. An hour later, the ships-of-war were under way. Gadsden, Cotesworth Pinckney, and the rest at Fort Johnson watched all their movements; in Charleston, the wharfs and water-side along the bay were crowded with troops under arms and lookers-on. Their adversary must be foiled, or their city may perish, their houses be sacked and burnt, and the savages on the frontier spring from their lurking-places.

1776. June 28. No grievous oppressions weighed down the industry of South Carolina; she came forth to the struggle from generous sympathy; and now the battle is to be fought for her chief city and the province.

The "Thunderbomb," covered by the "Friendship," began the action by throwing shells, which it continued till more than sixty were discharged; of these some burst in the air; one lighted on the magazine without doing injury; the rest sunk in the morass, or were buried in the sand within the fort. At about a quarter to eleven, the "Active," of twenty-eight guns, disregarding four or five shots fired at her while under sail; the "Bristol," with fifty guns, having on board Sir Peter Parker and Lord William Campbell, the governor; the "Experiment," also of fifty guns; and the "Solebay," of twenty-eight, — brought up within about three hundred and fifty yards of the fort, let go their anchors with springs upon their cables, and began a most furious cannonade. Every sailor expected that two broadsides would end the strife; but the soft, fibrous, spongy wood of the palmetto withstood the rapid fire, and neither split, nor splintered, nor started; and the parapet was high enough to protect the men on the platforms. When broadsides from three or four of the men-of-war struck the logs at the same instant, the shock gave the merlons a tremor, but the pile remained uninjured. Moultrie had but one

tenth as many guns as were brought to bear on him, and was moreover obliged to stint the use of powder. His guns accordingly were fired very slowly, the officers taking aim, and waiting always for the smoke to clear away, that they might point with more precision. "Mind the commodore, mind the fifty-gun ships," were the words that passed along the platform from officers and men.

"Shall I send for more powder?" asked Moultrie of Motte.

"To be sure," said Motte.

And Moultrie wrote to Lee: "I believe we shall want more powder. At the rate we go on, I think we shall; but you can see that. Pray send us more, if you think proper."

More vessels were seen coming up, and cannon were heard from the north-east. Clinton had promised support; not knowing what else to do, he directed the batteries on Long Island to open a cannonade; and several shells were thown into Thomson's intrenchments, doing no damage beyond wounding one soldier. The firing was returned by Thomson with his one eighteen pounder; but, from the distance, with little effect. 1776. June 28.

At twelve o'clock, the light infantry, grenadiers, and the fifteenth regiment embarked in boats, while floating batteries and armed craft got under way to cover the landing; but the troops never so much as once attempted to land. The detachment had hardly left Long Island before it was ordered to disembark, for it was seen that "the landing was impracticable, and would have been the destruction of many brave men, without the least probability of success." The American defences were so well constructed, the approach so difficult, Thomson so vigilant, his men such skilful sharpshooters, that, had the British landed, they would have been cut to pieces. "It was impossible," says Clinton, "to decide positively upon any plan;" and he did nothing.

An attack on Haddrell's Point would have been still more desperate; though the commodore, at Clinton's request, sent three frigates to co-operate with him in that design. The people of Charleston, as they looked from the battery with senses quickened by the nearness of danger, beheld

the "Sphinx," the "Acteon," and the "Syren," each of twenty-eight guns, sailing as if to get between Haddrell's Point and the fort, so as to enfilade the works, and, when the rebels should be driven from them, to cut off their retreat. It was a moment of danger, for the fort on that side was unfinished; but the pilots, keeping too far to the south, ran all the three upon a bank of sand, known as the Lower Middle Ground. Seeing the frigates thus entangled, the beholders in the town were swayed alternately by fears and hopes; the armed inhabitants stood every one at his post, uncertain but that they might be called to immediate action, hardly daring to believe that Moultrie's small and ill-furnished garrison could beat off the squadron, when behold! his flag disappears. Fearing that his colors had been struck, they prepared to meet the invaders at the water's edge, trusting in Providence, and preferring death to slavery.

1776. June 28.

In the fort, William Jasper, a sergeant, perceived that the flag had been cut down by a ball from the enemy, and had fallen over the ramparts. "Colonel," said he to Moultrie, "don't let us fight without a flag."

"What can you do?" asked Moultrie; "the staff is broken off."

"Then," said Jasper, "I'll fix it to a halberd, and place it on the merlon of the bastion next the enemy;" and leaping through an embrasure, and braving the thickest fire from the ship, he took up the flag, returned with it safely, and planted it, as he had promised, on the summit of the merlon.

The sea gleamed with light; the almost vertical sun of midsummer glared from a cloudless sky; and the intense heat was increased by the blaze from the cannon on the platform. All of the garrison threw off their coats during the action, and some were nearly naked; Moultrie and several of the officers smoked their pipes as they gave their orders. They knew that their movements were observed from the house-tops of Charleston; by the veteran Armstrong, and the little army at Haddrell's Point; by Gadsden at Fort Johnson, who was chafing with discontent at not being

himself in the centre of danger. Exposed to an incessant cannonade, which seemed sufficient to daunt the bravest veterans, they stuck to their guns with the greatest constancy.

Hit by a ball which entered through an embrasure, Macdaniel cried out to his brother soldiers: "I am dying, but don't let the cause of liberty expire with me this day."

Jasper removed the mangled corpse from the sight of his comrades, and cried aloud: "Let us revenge that brave man's death."

The slow, intermitted fire, which was skilfully directed against the commodore and the brave seamen on board the "Bristol," shattered that ship, and carried wounds and death. Never had a British squadron "experienced so rude an encounter." Neither the tide nor the wind suffered them to retire. Once the springs on the cables of the "Bristol" were swept away; as she swung round with her stern towards the fort, she drew upon herself the fire of every gun that could be brought to bear upon her. The slaughter was dreadful; of all who in the beginning of the action were stationed on her quarter-deck, not one escaped being killed or wounded. For a moment, it is said, the commodore stood alone, an example of intrepidity and firmness. Morris, his captain, having the fore-arm shattered by a chain-shot, and also receiving a wound in the neck, was taken into the cockpit; but, after submitting to amputation, he insisted on being carried on the quarter-deck once more, where he resumed the command, and continued it till he was shot through the body, when, feeling dissolution near, he commended his family to the providence of God and the generosity of his country. Meantime, the eyes of the commodore and of all on board his fleet were "frequently, and impatiently," and vainly turned toward the army. If the troops would but co-operate, he was sure of gaining the island; for at about one o'clock he believed that he had silenced the guns of the rebels, and that the fort was on the point of being evacuated. "If this were so," Clinton afterward asked him, "why did you not take possession of the fort, with the seamen and marines whom you practised

1776. June 28.

for the purpose?" And Parker's rejoinder was, that he had no prospect of speedy support from Clinton. But the pause was owing to the scarcity of powder, of which the little that remained to Moultrie was reserved for the musketry, as a defence against an expected attack from the land forces. Lee should of himself have replenished his stock; Moultrie had seasonably requested it, but in the heat of the action he received from Lee this answer: "If you should unfortunately expend your ammunition without beating off the enemy or driving them on ground, spike your guns and retreat."

1776. June 28.

A little later, a better message came from Rutledge, now at Charleston: "I send you five hundred pounds of powder. You know our collection is not very great. Honor and victory to you and our worthy countrymen with you. Do not make too free with your cannon. Be cool and do mischief." These five hundred pounds of powder, with two hundred pounds from a schooner lying at the back of the fort, were all the supplies that Moultrie received. At three in the afternoon, Lee, on a report from his aide-de-camp Byrd, sent Muhlenberg's Virginia riflemen to re-enforce Thomson. A little before five, Moultrie was able to renew his fire. At about five, the marines in the ships' tops, seeing a lieutenant with eight or ten men remove the heavy barricade from the gateway of the fort, thought that Moultrie and his party were about to retreat; but the gateway was unbarred to receive a visit from Lee. The officers, half naked, and begrimed with the hot day's work, respectfully laid down their pipes as he drew near. The general himself pointed two or three guns, after which he said to Moultrie: "Colonel, I see you are doing very well here, you have no occasion for me, I will go up to town again;" and thus he left the fort.

When at a few minutes past seven the sun went down in a blaze of light, the battle was still raging, though the British showed signs of weariness. The inhabitants of Charleston, whom the evening sea-breeze collected on the battery, could behold the flag of crescent liberty still proudly waving; and they continued gazing anxiously, till the short

twilight was suddenly merged in the deep darkness of a southern night, when nothing was seen but continual flashes, followed by peals as it were of thunder coming out from a heavy cloud. Many thousand shot were fired from the shipping, and hardly a hut or a tree on the island remained unhurt; but the works were very little damaged, and only one gun was silenced. The firing from the fort continued slowly; and the few shot they were able to send were heard to strike against the ships' timbers. Just after nine o'clock, a great part of his ammunition being expended in a cannonade of about ten hours, his people fatigued, the "Bristol" and the "Experiment" made nearly wrecks, the tide of ebb almost done, with no prospect of help from the army at the eastward, and no possibility of his being of any further service, Sir Peter Parker resolved to withdraw. At half-past nine his ships slipped their cables, and dropped down with the tide to their previous moorings. 1776. June 28.

Of the four hundred and thirty-five Americans in the fort, who took part in this action, all but eleven remained alive, and but twenty-six were wounded. At so small a cost of life had Charleston been defended and a province saved.

When, after a cannonade of about ten hours, the firing ceased, the inhabitants of Charleston remained in suspense, till a boat from Moultrie announced his victory. At morning's dawn, the "Acteon" frigate was seen fast aground at about four hundred yards from the fort. The "Syren" had got off; and so too had the "Sphinx," yet with the loss of her bowsprit. Some shots were exchanged, but the company of the "Acteon" soon set fire to her, and deserted her. Men from the fort boarded her while she was burning, pointed and discharged two or three of her guns at the commodore, and loaded their three boats from her stores. In one half of an hour after they abandoned her, she blew up; and, to the eyes of the Carolinians, the pillar of smoke, as it rose over the vessel, took the form of the palmetto.

The "Bristol" had forty men killed and seventy-one wounded. Lord William Campbell received a contusion in his left side, and, after lingering two years, died from its effects. Sir Peter Parker was slightly injured. About

seventy balls went through his ship; her mizzenmast was so much hurt that it fell early the next morning; the mainmast was cut away about fifteen feet below the hounds; and the broad pendant streamed from a jury-mast, lower than the foremast. She had suffered so much in hull, masts, and rigging that, but for the stillness of the sea, she must have gone down. On board the "Experiment," twenty-three were killed and fifty-six wounded; Scott, her captain, lost his left arm, and was otherwise so severely wounded that his life was long despaired of; the ship was much damaged, her mizzen gaff was shot away. The loss of the British fleet, in killed and wounded, was two hundred and five. The royal governors of North Carolina and of South Carolina, as well as Clinton and Cornwallis, and seven regiments, were witnesses of the defeat. The commodore and the general long indulged in reciprocal criminations. Nothing remained for the army but to quit the sands of Long Island, yet three weeks more passed away before they embarked in transports for New York, under the single "convoy of the 'Solebay' frigate; the rest of the fleet being under the necessity of remaining still longer to refit."

The success of the Carolinians was due to the wisdom and adequateness of their preparations. It saved not a post, but the state. It kept seven regiments away from New York for two months; it gave security to Georgia, and three years' peace to Carolina; it dispelled throughout the south the dread of British superiority; it drove the loyalists into obscurity. To the other colonies it was a message of brotherhood and union from South Carolina as a self-directing republic.

1776. June 29. On the morning of the twenty-ninth, Charleston harbor was studded with sails, and alive with the voices of men, hastening to congratulate the victors. They crowded round their deliverers with transports of gratitude; they gazed admiringly on the uninjured walls of the fortress, the ruinous marks of the enemy's shot on every tree and hut in its neighborhood; they enjoyed the sight of the wreck of the "Acteon," of the discomfited men-of-war riding at anchor at two and a half miles' distance; they

laughed at the commodore's broad pendant, scarcely visible on a jury main-topmast, while their own blue flag crowned the merlon. Letters of congratulation came down from Rutledge and from Gadsden; and Lee gave his witness that "no men ever did behave better, or ever could behave better."

On the afternoon of the thirtieth, Lee reviewed the garrison, and renewed to them the praise that was their due. While they were thus drawn out, the women of Charleston presented to the second regiment a pair of silken colors, one of blue, one of red, richly embroidered by their own hands; and Susanna Smith Elliott, a scion of one of the oldest families of the colony, who, being left an orphan, had been bred up by Rebecca Brewton Motte, stepped forth to the front of the intrepid band in matronal beauty, young and stately, light-haired, with eyes of mild expression, and a pleasant countenance; and, as she put the flags into the hands of Moultrie and Motte, she said in a low sweet voice: "Your gallant behavior in defence of liberty and your country entitles you to the highest honors; accept these two standards as a reward justly due to your regiment; and I make not the least doubt, under Heaven's protection, you will stand by them as long as they can wave in the air of liberty." And the regiment, plighting the word which they were to keep sacredly at the cost of many of their lives, answered: "The colors shall be honorably supported, and shall never be tarnished." 1776. June 30.

On the fourth of July, Rutledge came to visit the garrison. There stood Moultrie, there Motte, there Marion, there Peter Horry, there William Jasper, and all the survivors of the battle. Rutledge was happy in having insisted on holding possession of the fort; happy in the consciousness of his unwavering reliance on Moultrie; happy in the glory that gathered round the first days of the new-born commonwealth; and when, in the name of South Carolina, he returned thanks to the defenders, his burning words adequately expressed the impassioned gratitude of the people. To Jasper was offered a lieutenant's July.

commission, which he modestly declined, accepting only a sword.

South Carolina, by her president and the common voice, spontaneously decreed that the post on Sullivan's Island should, for all future time, be known as Fort Moultrie; her assembly crowned her victorious sons with applause. The tidings leaped from colony to colony on their way to the north, and the continental congress voted their thanks to Lee, Moultrie, Thomson, and the officers and men under their command. But, at the time of that vote, congress was no more the representative of dependent colonies; the victory at Fort Moultrie was the bright morning star that harbingered American independence.

1776. July.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE RETREAT FROM CANADA.

JANUARY—JULY, 1776.

THE death of Montgomery dispelled the illusion that hovered round the invasion of Canada. The soldiers whose time expired on the last day of December insisted on their discharge; some went off without leave, taking with them their arms; the rest were dejected, and anxious to be at home. There remained encamped near Quebec, rather than besieging it, about four hundred Americans and as many wavering Canadians. The force commanded by Carleton was twice as numerous as both, and was concentrated in the well-provisioned and strongly fortified town. Yet, in the face of disasters and a superior enemy, Arnold preserved his fortitude. "I have no thought," he said, "of leaving this proud town until I enter it in triumph." Montgomery had required an army of ten thousand men; Arnold declared that a less number would not suffice. 1776. Jan. to March.

The chief command devolved on Wooster, who was at Montreal; and he wrote in every direction for aid. To Warner and the Green Mountain Boys he sent word that they must come down as fast as parties could be collected, by fifties or even by tens; of Washington, who had no artillery for his own use, he asked not men only, but heavy cannon and mortars; to the president of congress and to Schuyler he said plainly: "We shall want every thing," men, heavy cannon, mortars, shot, shells, powder, and hard money. Bills of credit had no currency; "money," he reiterated, "we must have, or give up every thing;" "if we are not immediately supplied with hard cash, we must starve, quit the country, or lay it under contribution."

Wherever among the colonies the news spread of Mont-

gomery's fall, there was one general burst of sorrow, and a burning desire to retrieve his defeat. Washington overcame his scruples about initiating measures, and, without waiting to consult congress, recommended to Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, each to raise and send forward a regiment on behalf of the continent; and the three colonies eagerly met his call, for the annexation of Canada was then their passion. The continental congress specially encouraged Western New Hampshire to complete a regiment for the service; and ordered one regiment from Philadelphia, another from New Jersey, to march for the St. Lawrence without delay. These were to be soon followed by four or five more.

1776. Jan. to March.

In the first moments of the excitement, the summons was obeyed; citizens became soldiers, left the comforts of home with alacrity, and undertook a march of many hundred miles, to a country in that rigorous season almost uninhabitable, through snow and over frozen lakes, without tents, or any shelter from the inclemency of the weather. Their unanimity, their zeal for liberty, their steady perseverance, called forth the most confident predictions of their success; but reflection showed insurmountable obstacles. Since congress for eight months had not been able to furnish Washington, who was encamped in the most thickly peopled part of the country, with the men, clothes, blankets, money, and powder required for the recovery of Boston, how could they hope to keep up the siege of Quebec?

To maintain a foothold in Canada, there was need, in the first place, of the good-will and confidence of its people. Montgomery had from his birth been familiar with Catholics; but Wooster, a New England Calvinist from a country town in Connecticut, cradled in the hatred of popery, irritated the jealousies of the Canadian clergy, who refused absolution to the friends of the Americans, and threatened them from the pulpit with eternal woe. Nor were his manners and frugal style of living suited to win the Canadian nobility. But, without the support of their priests or their feudal superiors, the fickle and uncertain people could not be solidly organized.

It was in the next place necessary to send into Canada an army of ten thousand men, with trains of artillery for a siege, and a full military chest. But congress, in its dread of a standing force, had no troops at all except on short enlistments. Moreover, the Atlantic and the St. Lawrence were more easily used for transportation than the road by land from the colonies to Quebec. By the middle of March no more than fifteen hundred Americans had reached Montreal. The royalists in Canada began to cry victory, and were bolder than ever. 1776. March.

The relations with the Indians became alarming; yet Schuyler dissuaded from any attempt at employing them; and congress voted not to suffer them to serve in its armies without the previous consent of the tribes in a national council, nor then without its own express approval. But, to guard against dangers from the Five Nations, James Deane was sent with the returning deputations from the Oneidas and the seven tribes in Canada. On the journey they marched in Indian file, and at sunset encamped in a grove of hemlocks, of which the boughs furnished beds. The council, in which the nations were much divided, began on the twenty-eighth of March with the usual ceremonies to wipe away tears, to cleanse from blood, to lighten the grief which choked speech. The next day was given to acts of condolence, when new trees, as they expressed it, were raised in the place of chiefs who had fallen, and their names published to the Six Nations. On the thirty-first, the confederated tribes gave each other pledges to observe a strict neutrality in the present quarrel. Nothing amazed them more than the flight of the British from Boston.

For four months Wooster remained the highest officer in Canada. All accounts agree that he was "unfit, totally unfit," for so important a station, which he had never sought, and which he desired to surrender to an officer of higher rank. Yet he did some things well; in the early part of his command, he arrested Campbell, the Indian agent of the British, and La Corne Saint-Luc, and sent them out of the province. He allowed each parish to choose its own officers, thus introducing the system of self-govern-

ment in towns. He intended to employ committees of safety and committees of correspondence, and thus lead the way to a Canadian convention, which might send delegates to the general congress. When a friend wished he might enter Quebec through its gates, "Not so, but over its walls," was his reply; and they were not words of rodomontade, for the aged man was brave. He was too old to unlearn his partiality for Connecticut, and sometimes paid his men in hard money, when those round Quebec received only paper; and sometimes granted a furlough which carried pay, instead of a discharge. With Schuyler, who was far the more testy of the two, he had constant bickerings, which attracted the attention and divided the opinion of congress.

1776. April. On the first day of April, Wooster took command of the troops round Quebec. The garrison laughed as they saw from the ramparts the general, now venerable from his years, and distinguished by his singularly large wig, walking solemnly along the walls, to spy out their weak parts. Scattered round Quebec, on both sides of the river, and at great distances from each other, lay about two thousand men; of whom not many more than half were able to do duty. How to supply them with food was a great difficulty. The insignificant batteries of three light guns and one howitzer on Point Levi; of twice that number of guns, two howitzers, and two small mortars on the heights of Abraham; and of two guns at the Traverse, were harmless to the enemy; the store of powder did not exceed three or four tons; of shot, ten or twelve; there were no engineers, and few artillerists; of the troops who had wintered in Canada, constituting more than half of the whole number, the time of service would expire on the fifteenth of April, when neither art, nor money, nor entreaty, would be able to prevail on them to remain. Livingston's regiment of about two hundred Canadians would be free on the same day, and very few of them would re-engage. Arnold, at his own solicitation, withdrew to Montreal.

The regiments sent forward to Canada arrived at Albany in a very incomplete state, and were further thinned on the

march by sickness and desertion. The Canadians, who had confided in Montgomery and given him aid before Quebec, now only waited an opportunity to rise against the Americans. The country was outraged by the arbitrariness of the military occupation; the peasantry had been forced to furnish wood and other articles at less than the market price, or for promissory certificates; the clergy, neglected or ill used, were unanimously hostile; of the more cultivated classes, both French and English, seven eighths were willing to assist in driving back the invaders. The savages kept aloof from the Americans, and it was feared would, early in the spring, fall on their frontier.

Alarmed by constant unfavorable reports, congress, on the twentieth, urged Washington to hasten the departure of four battalions destined for Quebec, as "a week, a day, even an hour might prove decisive;" but on the twentieth and twenty-first, before receiving the letters, he had despatched them, under Thompson of Pennsylvania as brigadier. Two or three days later, the unsuccessful attempt of the Canadians, near the end of March, under Beaujeu, to raise the blockade of Quebec, became known; and though Washington at that moment was in want of men, arms, and money, congress, giving way to its unchecked impulses, declared itself "determined on the reduction of Quebec," and, without even consulting the commander in chief, suddenly and peremptorily ordered him to detach six additional battalions from his army for service in Canada, and further inquired of him if he could spare more. 1776. April.

Late at night on the twenty-fifth, Washington received the order by express; his effective force on that day consisted of but eight thousand three hundred and one; and of this small force, poorly armed and worse clad, he detached six of his best battalions, containing more than three thousand men, at a time when the British ministry was directing against New York thirty thousand veteran troops. The command of the brigade was given to Sullivan; among its officers were Stark and Reed of New Hampshire, Anthony Wayne and Irvine of Pennsylvania. The troops were scantily provided for the march; some companies

had not a waistcoat among them all, and but one shirt to a man.

Washington resigned himself to the ill-considered votes of congress, and sent off his best troops to Canada at their word. "At the same time," so he wrote to congress, "trusting New York and Hudson River to the handful of men remaining here is running too great a risk. The general officers now here think it absolutely necessary to increase the army at this place with at least ten thousand men."

Destitute of hard money, congress requested the New England states to collect as much of it as they could, and forward it to Schuyler. Having stripped Washington of ten battalions, or about half his effective force, they next ordered that provisions, powder, of which his stock was very low, and articles of clothing for ten thousand men, should follow, with all the hard money which the New England states could collect. They were resolved to maintain ten thousand men on the St. Lawrence, leaving Washington very much to his own devices and to solicitations addressed to the colonies nearest him, at a time when it was the grand plan of the English to take possession of Hudson River.

1776. April.

For Canada a general was wanted not less than an army. Schuyler having refused the service, and Lee having been transferred to the south, Putnam stood next in rank; but Thomas of Massachusetts, a man of superior ability and culture though of less experience, was raised to the rank of major-general, and ordered to Quebec. In the army with which he was to hold Canada, the small-pox raged; Thomas had never been inoculated, and his journey to the camp was a journey to meet death unattended by glory.

He was closely followed by Franklin, Chase, and Charles Carroll, whom congress had commissioned to promise a guarantee of their estates to the clergy; to establish a free press; to allure the people of Canada by the prospect of a free trade with all nations; and to invite them to set up a government for themselves, and join the federal union. John Carroll, the brother of Charles, a Jesuit, afterwards

archbishop of Baltimore, came also in the hope of moderating the opposition of the Canadian clergy. The commissioners discovered on their arrival a general apprehension that the Americans would be driven out of the province; so that without hard money, and without a large army, they could not ask the people to take part in continuing the war.

Thomas arrived near Quebec on the first of May, and employed the next three days in ascertaining the condition of his command. He found one thousand nine hundred men, including officers. Of these, nine hundred were sick, chiefly with the small-pox; out of the remaining thousand, three hundred were soldiers whose enlistments had expired on the fifteenth of April, and who refused duty, or were very importunate to return home. This small army occupied several posts so distant from each other that not more than three hundred men could be rallied against any sudden attack. In all the magazines there remained but about one hundred and fifty pounds of powder and six days' provisions. The French inhabitants were much disaffected, and supplies were obtained from them with difficulty. 1776. May.

On the fifth, he called a council of war, who agreed unanimously to prepare for a retreat by removing the invalids immediately to Three Rivers, and embarking the cannon as soon as possible. The decision was made too late; that same evening ships arrived before Quebec. Early on the sixth, the "Surprise" frigate, the "Isis," and the sloop "Martin," which had forced their way up the river when it was almost impracticable from ice, came into the basin, and landed their marines and that part of the twenty-ninth which they had on board; and not far from noon, while the Americans were embarking their sick and their artillery, the garrison thus re-enforced about one thousand strong, in two divisions, formed in columns six deep, with a train of six cannon, made a sally out of St. John's and St. Louis's gates, and attacked the American sentinels and main guard. Thomas attempted to bring his men under arms; but, unable to collect more than two hundred and fifty on the

plains, he directed a retreat to Deschambault, forty-eight miles above Quebec. The troops fled with precipitation, leaving their provisions, cannon, and five hundred muskets, and about two hundred of their sick. Of these, one half crept away from the hospitals as they could and fell into the hands of merciful men; the Canadian peasants nursed them with the kindness that their religion required; and Carleton, by proclamation, offered them proper care in the general hospital, with leave to return home when their health should be restored.

At Deschambault Thomas again held a council of war; and, by a vote of twelve to three, it was carried that the half-starved army should not attempt to make a stand below Sorel. The English who were in pursuit, less forbearing towards French insurgents than towards colonists of the same stock with themselves, carried the torch in their hands, to burn the houses of those who had befriended the rebels.

1776. May.

On the eighth the ship-of-war "Niger" and three transports with the forty-seventh regiment from Halifax, on the tenth the "Triton" with more transports and troops, came in, and others continued to arrive. At the same time, Sir John Johnson stirred up an attack by regulars, Canadians, and Indians from the north-west. To guard against this new danger, Arnold stationed Bedel, of New Hampshire, with about four hundred men and two cannon, at the narrow pass of the Cedars. This pass was but fifteen leagues above Montreal; and Thomas, at Sorel, was but as many leagues distant below.

The American commissioners calmly looked at things as they were and gave clear advice. They observed that the invaders had lost the affections of the Canadian people; that, for the want of hard money to support themselves with honor, they were distressed for provisions; that they were incapable of exact discipline, because sent for short periods of service; that, always too few in numbers, they were wasted by the small-pox; and they wrote: "We report it as our unanimous opinion that it is better immediately to withdraw the army from Canada, and fortify the

passes on the lakes." They even wished that Sullivan's brigade might be stopped at Fort George.

But the continental congress, which had summoned Washington to Philadelphia for consultation on the defence of the middle colonies, reasoned differently on learning the retreat from Quebec. It considered the loss of Canada as exposing the frontiers of New York and New England not to Indians only, but to the ravages of the British; it therefore enjoined Thomas to "display his military qualities, and acquire laurels." Of hard money it sent forward all that was in its treasury, which was no more than sixteen hundred sixty-two pounds one shilling and threepence; and having vainly tried every method to collect more, and being still bent on supporting the expedition, it resolved to supply the troops in Canada with provisions and clothing from the other colonies. Its resolutions were unmeaning words; it had neither adequate means of transportation nor magazines; besides, the campaign in Canada was decided before its votes were made known. 1776. May.

The detachment from Detroit under Captain Forster, composed of forty of the eighth regiment, a hundred Canadians, and several hundred Indians from the north-west, appeared in sight of the Cedars. Bedel, commander of the fort, committing it to Major Butterfield, deserted under pretence of soliciting a re-enforcement. On his arrival at Montreal, Arnold, on the sixteenth, detached Major Henry Sherburne of Rhode Island with one hundred and forty men to relieve the fort; but, before he could make his way through the enemy to the Cedars, Butterfield on the nineteenth, though he had two field-pieces and sufficient ammunition, and officers and men willing to defend the post, cowered under a dread of the Indians, and, after sustaining no other attack than from musketry, surrendered himself and his garrison prisoners at discretion.

The next day, as Sherburne, ignorant of the surrender, came to the entrance of a wood which was about five miles from the fort, he was attacked in open ground by an enemy who fought under cover of trees. After a skirmish of an hour, the Americans were intercepted in their attempt at a

retreat, and more than a hundred of them were taken prisoners. The savages, who lost in the battle a great warrior of the Seneca tribe, immediately stripped them almost naked, tomahawking or scalping the wounded men, in violation of the terms of surrender.

At the news of the double disaster, Arnold moved with about seven hundred men to recover the captives by force; but as the British officer declared that a massacre of the prisoners, four hundred and seventy-four in number, would be the inevitable consequence of an attack, he consented to obtain the release of them all, except four captains who were retained as hostages, by promising the return of an equal number of British prisoners. The engagement led to mutual criminations; the justification of the breach of one treaty by the neglect of another.

In this manner the British drew near Montreal from the west. From the lower side, news came that Thomas had been seized by the small-pox. But the commissioners would not suffer Wooster to resume the command. At the end of May, confusion prevailed in every department of the army. The troops lived from hand to mouth, often for days without meat, levying contributions of meal; the scattered army did not exceed four thousand men, three fourths of whom had never had the small-pox; many of the officers were incompetent. Yet congress voted it necessary to keep possession of the country, and to contest every foot of ground, especially on the St. Lawrence below the mouth of the Sorel.

1776. June. In the helplessness of its zeal, on the first day of June, while Arnold's thoughts were bent on making a safe retreat, it resolved "that six thousand militia be employed to re-enforce the army in Canada, and to keep up the communication with that province;" and called upon Massachusetts to make up half that number, Connecticut one quarter, New Hampshire and New York the rest. It also authorized the employment of Indians.

On that same day, the first division of the Brunswick troops under Riedesel arrived with Burgoyne at Quebec, and, with the regiments from Ireland and others, put into

the hands of Carleton an army of nine thousand nine hundred and eighty-four effective men, well-disciplined, and abundantly provided with all the materials of war. The Americans were in imminent danger of being cut off and utterly destroyed.

The death of Thomas, on the second, left the command to Sullivan. Arriving with his party at Sorel on the fifth, he assumed it with the mistaken confidence and ostentation of inexperience. "In a few days," said he, "I can reduce the army to order, and put a new face upon our affairs here." A council of war resolved on an attempt against the enemy at Three Rivers; a party of about fifteen hundred, mostly Pennsylvanians, including the regiments of Saint-Clair, Wayne, and Irvine, was placed for that purpose under the command of Thompson. "I am determined," wrote Sullivan to Washington, "to hold the most important posts as long as one stone is left upon another." At one o'clock in the morning of the seventh, Thompson and his party arrived at St. Clair's station on the Nicolet; lay hid in the woods on its bank during the day; and in the evening crossed the St. Lawrence, intending a surprise on a party which was not supposed to exceed four hundred. But a Canadian peasant, as soon as they landed, hastened to inform General Frazer at Three Rivers of their approach; and, moreover, twenty-five transports, laden with troops, had, by Carleton's directions, been piloted past Quebec without stopping, and had arrived at Three Rivers just in time to take part in repelling the attack. A large force was promptly landed with field-pieces; and was disposed with a view to surround and take captive the whole body of assailants. The short darkness of that latitude was soon over; as day began to appear, the Americans, who were marching under the bank of the river, were cannonaded from the ships; undismayed, they took their way through a thickly wooded swamp, above their knees in mire and water; and after a most wearisome struggle of four hours reached an open piece of low ground, where they endeavored to form. Wayne began the attack, and forced an advanced party to run; his companions then pressed forward in col-

1776. June.

umn against the breastworks, which covered the main body of the enemy. They displayed undisputed gallantry, but, being outnumbered more than three to one, were compelled to retire. To secure time for the retreat, Wayne and Allen, with about five officers and twenty men, sheltered by the dense forest, which hid the paucity of their numbers, kept up a fire from the edge of the swamp for an hour longer, when they also were obliged to fly. Thompson and Irvine, who were separated from the rest of the party, were betrayed by the Canadians; about one hundred and fifty of the fugitives were taken prisoners; the main body, saved, as British officers asserted, by Carleton's want of alertness, and his calling in the parties that guarded the fords of the Du Loup, wandered about that day and the following night, without food or refreshment except water, and worn out by watching and fatigue. On the ninth they found their boats, and returned to Sorel. The American loss exceeded two hundred; Wayne's regiment, which began the attack, suffered the most.

1776. June.

"I now think only of a glorious death, or a victory obtained against superior numbers," wrote Sullivan, as he learned that the force intended for Canada was arrived, with Burgoyne at its head; and he would have remained at Sorel. The post was not defensible; the remains of the army, encamped there, did not exceed two thousand five hundred men; about a thousand more were at other stations, but most of them under inoculation. Sickness, want of regular and sufficient food, the recent repulse, the threefold superiority of the British in numbers, and their incomparable superiority in appointments, made resistance impossible. Slow and cautious as were Carleton's movements, any further delay would enable the British to cut off their retreat. A council of field officers was all but unanimous for quitting the ground; Arnold, Antill, and Hazen, who were not present, were of the same opinion.

On the fourteenth, the fleet with the British forces was coming up the river under full sail; when an hour or a little more before their arrival, Sullivan broke up his camp, taking away with him every thing, even to a spade. The

guard at Berthier retreated by land, leaving nine boats behind.

At Chambly all the boats and baggage were brought over the rapids, except three heavy pieces of cannon. Arnold with his little garrison of three hundred men remained at Montreal till the enemy were at twelve miles' distance from him, and having, under instructions from Schuyler, seized such parcels of goods as could be serviceable, crossed safely to La Prairie. All that was left of the invading army met on the seventeenth at St. John's; one half of them being sick, almost all destitute of clothing, and having no provisions except salt pork and flour. On the eighteenth, the emaciated, half-naked men, broken in strength and in discipline, too weak to have beaten off an assault, as pitiable a spectacle as could be seen, removed to Isle-aux-Noix, where Sullivan proposed to await express orders from Schuyler. They were languidly pursued by a column under the command of Burgoyne, who excused his inactivity by pleading instructions from Carleton to hazard nothing till the column on his right should be able to co-operate with him.

Meanwhile, congress had introduced a new element of confusion. On the day on which Sullivan halted at Isle-aux-Noix, Gates, who enjoyed the friendship of John Adams and had been elected a major-general, was appointed to take command of the forces in Canada. The appointment could give Schuyler no umbrage, for he himself had uniformly refused to go into Canada; but no sooner had Gates reached Albany than the question arose, whether the command would revert to Schuyler the moment the army should be found south of the Canada line.

At Isle-aux-Noix the men fit for duty remained for eight days, till the invalids could be taken to Crown Point. The voyage was made in leaky boats which had no awnings; so that the sick lay drenched in water and exposed to the sun. Their only food was raw pork and hard bread or unbaked flour. A physician who was an eye-witness said: "At the sight of so much privation and distress, I wept till I had no more power to weep." When, early in July, all the fragments of the army of Canada had reached

1776. July.



Crown Point, the scene of distress produced a momentary despair. Every thing about them, their clothes, their blankets, the air, the very ground they trod on, was infected with the pestilence. "I did not look into a tent or a hut," says Trumbull, "in which I did not find either a dead or dying man." Of about five thousand men, housed under tents, or rudely built sheds, or huts of brush, exposed to the damp air of the night, full half were invalids; more than thirty new graves were made every day. In a little more than two months, the northern army lost by desertion and death more than five thousand men.

1776. July.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED COLONIES DEMAND INDEPENDENCE.

JUNE—JULY, 1776.

AMERICAN independence was not an act of sudden passion, nor the work of one man or one assembly. It had been discussed in every part of the country by farmers and merchants, by mechanics and planters, by the fishermen along the coast and by the backwoodsmen of the west; in town-meetings and from the pulpit; at social gatherings and around the camp fires; in newspapers and in pamphlets; in county conventions and conferences of committees; in colonial congresses and assemblies. The decision was put off only to hear the voice of the people. Virginia having uttered her will, and communicated it to all her sister colonies, proceeded, as though independence had been proclaimed, to form her constitution. More counsellors waited on her assembly than they took notice of: they were aided in their deliberations by the teachings of the lawgivers of Greece; by the line of magistrates who had framed the Roman code; by those who had written best in English on government and public freedom; but most of all by the great example of the English constitution, which was an aristocratic republic with a permanent executive. They passed by monarchy and hereditary aristocracy as unessential forms, and looked behind them for the self-subsistent elements of English liberty. 1776. June.

The principles of the Virginia declaration of rights remained to her people as a perpetual possession, and a pledge of progress in more tranquil days; but for the moment internal reforms were postponed; the elective franchise was not extended; nor was any thing done to abolish slavery beyond the prohibition of the slave-trade. The

king of England possessed the crown by birth and for life; the chief executive of Virginia owed his place to an election by the general assembly, and retained it for one year. The king was intrusted with a veto power, limited within Britain, extravagant and even retrospective in the colonies; the recollection that "by an inhuman use of his negative he had refused them permission to exclude negroes by law" misled the Virginians to withhold the veto power from the governor of their own choice.

1776. June. The governor, like the king, had at his side a privy council; and, in the construction of this body of eight men, the desire for some permanent element of government is conspicuous. Braxton, in the scheme which he forwarded from congress, wishing to come as near as possible to the forms of monarchy, would have had the governor continue in authority during good behavior, the council of state hold their places for life. But Patrick Henry, Mason, and the other chief members of the convention, did not share this dread of the power of the people; and nothing more was conceded than that no more than two of the eight councillors should be triennially changed, so that the whole body was to be renewed only once in the course of twelve years. The governor with their advice had the appointment of militia officers and of justices of the peace; but the general assembly by joint ballot elected the treasurer, the judges, and the officers of the higher courts. The general assembly, like the British parliament, consisted of two branches, an annual house of delegates and a senate of twenty-four members. The state was to be divided into twenty-four districts for the choice of senators, of whom one fourth were to be renewed each year.

The convention recognised the territorial rights of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas, and the limit set by the peace of 1763; otherwise it claimed jurisdiction over all the region, granted by the second charter of King James I. The privilege of purchasing Indian titles was reserved to the public; but, by resolves of the convention, a right of pre-emption was secured to actual settlers on unappropriated lands.

In framing the constitution, George Mason had a principal part, aided by the active participation of Richard Henry Lee and of George Wythe; a form of government, sent by Jefferson, arrived too late; but his draft of a preamble was adopted, and he was expected by Wythe to become the author of further reform. The institutions of Virginia then established, like every thing else which is the work of man's hands, were marked by imperfection; yet they called into being a republic, of which the ideal sovereignty, representing the unity of all public functions, resided in the collective people. The convention, having on the twenty-ninth of June unanimously adopted the constitution, at once transformed itself into a temporary general assembly, and made choice by ballot of a governor and a privy council. For governor the choice fell on Patrick Henry; and, on the first day of July, he, who had so lately been the subject surrounded by fellow-subjects, became the chief magistrate of his fellow-citizens in the commonwealth which, he said, had just formed "a system of government wisely calculated to secure equal liberty," and to take a principal part in a war "involving the lasting happiness of a great proportion of the human species." "If George III.," wrote Fox, "should for a moment compare himself to Patrick Henry, how humiliated he must be." 1776. July.

On the fourteenth of June, Connecticut, urged by the invitation and example of Virginia, instructed its delegates in favor of independence, foreign alliances, and a permanent union of the colonies; but the plan of confederation was not to go into effect till it should receive the assent of the several legislatures. At the same time, that Puritan commonwealth, which had in fact enjoyed a republican government more than a hundred years, began to conduct its administration in its own name. June.

On the same day and the next, the Delaware assembly, at the instance of Mackean, unanimously approved the resolution of congress of the fifteenth of May, overturned the proprietary government within her borders, substituted her own name on all occasions for that of the king, and gave to her delegates new instructions which left them at liberty

to vote respecting independence according to their judgment.

On the fifteenth, the council and assembly of New Hampshire, in reply to a letter from Bartlett and Whipple, their delegates in congress, unanimously voted in favor of "declaring the thirteen united colonies a free and independent state; and solemnly pleged their faith and honor to support the measure with their lives and fortunes."

1776. May. In May, the assembly of Massachusetts advised the people in their town-meetings to instruct their representatives on the question of independence; and a very great majority of the towns, all that were heard from, declared for it unanimously.

The choice of all New England was spontaneous and undoubted. Its extended line of sea-coast, winding round inlets and headlands, and rent with safe and convenient harbors, defied the menace of a blockade; and, except that Newport was coveted by the British as a shelter for their fleet, the ruggedness of its soil, and its comparatively compact population, gave it a sense of security against the return of the enemy.

Far different was the position of New York, which was the first of the large central colonies to mark out irrevocably her line of conduct. Devoted to commerce, she yet possessed but one seaport on the main, and, if that great mart should fall into the hands of the British, she must, for the time, resign all maritime intercourse with the world. The danger was not vague and distant; it was close at hand, distinctly known, and inevitable. On the twenty-fourth of May, the vote of the continental congress, recommending the establishment of a new government, was referred to John Morin Scott, Haring, Remsen, Lewis, Jay, Cuyler, and Broome; three days later, Remsen reported from the committee that the right of creating civil government is, and ought to be, in the people, and that the old form of government was dissolved; accordingly, on the thirty-first, resolutions were proposed by Scott, Jay, and Haring, ordering elections for deputies, with ample powers to institute a government which should continue in force

until a future peace with Great Britain. But early in June the New York congress had to pass upon the Virginia proposition of independence. This was the moment that showed the firmness and the purity of Jay; the darker the hour, the more ready he stood to cheer; the greater the danger, the more promptly he stepped forward to guide. He had insisted on the doubtful measure of a second petition to the king, with no latent weakness of purpose or cowardice of heart. The hope of obtaining redress was gone; he could now, with perfect peace of mind, give free scope to the earnestness of his convictions. Though it had been necessary for him to perish as a martyr, he could not and he would not swerve from his sense of duty. Believing that the provincial congress then in session had been vested with power to dissolve the connection with Great Britain, he held it necessary first to consult the people themselves. For this end, on the eleventh of June, the New York congress, on his motion, called upon the freeholders and electors of the colony to confer on the deputies whom they were about to choose full powers of administering government, framing a constitution, and deciding the great question of independence. 1776. June.

In this manner the unanimity of New York was insured; her decision remained no longer in doubt, though it could not be formally announced till after the election of its convention. It was taken in the presence of extreme danger, against which there was no hope that adequate preparations would be made. Bands of savages hovered on the inland frontier of the province; the army of Canada was flying before disease and want and a vastly superior force; an irresistible fleet was approaching the harbor of its chief city; and a veteran army, computed by no one at less than thirty thousand men, was almost in sight. The whole number of rank and file in Washington's army, present and fit for duty, was on the morning of the twelfth of June but six thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, with four hundred men in a continental regiment of artillery, and one single provincial company of artillery, raised through the zeal of Alexander Hamilton, who, though not yet twenty

years old, had after an examination been appointed its captain. Of the infantry, many were without arms; one regiment had only ninety-seven firelocks and seven bayonets, others were in nearly as bad a state, and no one was well equipped. In numbers the regiments from the east were deficient from twenty to fifty; and, few as the men were, the term of the enlistment of every one of them would arrive in a few months. Little had been done by congress to re-enforce Washington, except to pass votes ordering out large numbers of militia from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, and still again more militia under the name of the flying camps of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland; and none of these were to be engaged beyond December. Congress had not yet authorized the employment of men for three years or for the war; nor did it do so till near the end of June, when it was too late for any success in enlistments; the feeble army then under Washington's command was, by the conditions of its existence, to melt away in the autumn and coming winter.

Moreover, a secret plot was fostered by Tryon, who ever unscrupulous and indefatigable, from on board the "Duchess of Gordon," sought through the royalist mayor of the city of New York and others to prepare a body of conspirators, who should raise an insurrection in aid of Howe on his arrival, blow up the magazines, gain possession of the guns, and seize Washington and his principal officers. Some of the inferior agents were suspected of having intended to procure Washington's death. There were full proofs that the plan against his army was prosecuted with the utmost diligence; but it was discovered before it was matured. It is certain that two or three of his own guard were partners in the scheme of treachery; and one of them, after conviction before a court martial, was hanged. It was the first military execution of the revolution. This discovery of danger from secret foes made no change in the conduct of the commander in chief, who avowed that he placed his trust "in the protection of an all-wise and beneficent Being."

1776. June.

The new provincial congress of New Jersey, which came

fresh from the people, with ample powers, and organized itself in the evening of the eleventh of June, was opened with prayer by John Witherspoon, an eloquent Scottish minister of the same faith with John Knox; a man of great ability, learning, and liberality, ready to dash into pieces all images of false gods. Born near Edinburgh, trained up at its university, in 1768 he removed to Princeton, to become the successor of Jonathan Edwards, Davis, and Finley, as president of its college. A combatant of skepticism and the narrow philosophy of the materialists, he was deputed by Somerset county to take part in applying his noble theories to the construction of a civil government. 1776. June.

The body of which he was a member was instructed to prepare for the defence of the colony against an enemy whose arrival was hourly expected, with force enough to lay waste its villages and drench its plains in blood; next, to decide the question of independence; and, lastly, to form and establish a constitution. They promptly resolved to re-enforce the army of New York with three thousand three hundred of the militia. William Franklin, the last royalist governor, still lingered at Perth Amboy; and, in the hope of dividing public opinion by the semblance of a regular constitutional government, he had, by proclamation, called a meeting of the general assembly for the twentieth of June. The convention, on the fourteenth, voted that his proclamation ought not to be heeded; the next day he was arrested; as he refused to give his parole, he was kept under guard till he could be removed to Connecticut. On the twenty-second, it was resolved, by a vote of fifty-four against three, "that a government be formed for regulating the internal police of the colony, pursuant to the recommendation of the continental congress;" and in that congress five friends to independence were then elected to represent New Jersey. As the constitution, drafted by a committee

Jacob Green, Presbyterian minister of Hanover,

irman, was reported before independence had

a clause provided for the contingency of a

otherwise this charter from the people was

to remain firm and inviolable. Its principles were: a legislative power intrusted to two separate houses; a governor annually chosen by the legislature, and possessing only a casting vote in one branch of the legislature; judges to be appointed by the legislature for seven years and for five years; the elective franchise to be exercised by all inhabitants of full age, who had been residents for twelve months, and possessed fifty pounds proclamation money. No Protestant could be denied any rights or franchises on account of his religious principles; and to every person within the colony were guaranteed the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and an immunity from all tithes or church rates, except in conformity to his own engagements.

1776. June.

On the eighteenth of June, the committees of Philadelphia and of the several counties of Pennsylvania met at Carpenters' Hall in a provincial conference. The duty which they had to perform was imperative, and yet necessarily the occasion of a bitter domestic feud. The old proprietary government, in an existence of more than ninety years, had won the admiration of the wise throughout the world by its respect for religious and civil liberty, had kept itself free from the suspicion of having instigated or approved the obnoxious measures of the British ministry, and had maintained the attitude of a mediator between parliament and America. When the obstinacy of the king left no room for reconciliation, its career was run, and it came naturally to its end. Such of the members of the assembly as remained in their places confessed in a formal vote their "despair" of again bringing together a quorum; and when, according to the charter, they could only have kept their body alive by adjourning from day to day, they made an illegal adjournment to a day nearly two months later than that appointed for the vote of congress on independence, leaving the measures of defence unattended to. The adjournment was an abdication; and the people prepared promptly and somewhat roughly to supersede the expiring system. Nor were the proposed changes restricted only to forms: a fierce demand broke out for an immediate extension of the right

of suffrage to those "whom," it was held, "the resolve of congress had now rendered electors."

The provincial conference was necessarily composed of men who had hitherto not been concerned in the government; the old members of the assembly were most of them bound by their opinions, and all of them by their oaths, to keep aloof; Franklin, who by never taking his place in that body had preserved his freedom, would not place himself glaringly in contrast with his colleagues, and stayed away; while Reed, observing "that the province would be in the summer a great scene of party and contention," withdrew to the army, in which Washington had "pressed him to accept the" vacant "office of adjutant-general."

On the eighteenth Thomas Mackean was chosen president of the conference. On the nineteenth, one hundred and four members being present, the resolution of congress of the fifteenth of May was read twice, and after mature consideration was unanimously approved; the present government of the colony was condemned as incompetent; and a new one was ordered to be formed on the authority of the people only. Every other colony had shunned the mixture of questions of internal reform with the question of the relation to Great Britain; but here a petition was read from Germans, praying that all associators who were taxable might vote. In the election to the assembly, the possession of fifty pounds proclamation money had been required as the qualification of a voter, both in the city under its charter and in the counties, and the foreign born must further have been naturalized under a law which required an oath of allegiance to the British king; the conference reviving the simple provision of "the Great Law" of December, 1682, endowed every tax-payer with the right to vote for members of the constituent convention. So neither poverty nor place of birth any more disabled freemen; in Pennsylvania, liberty claimed for the builders of her house the rich and the poor, the German, the Scot, the Englishman, the Irishman, as well as the native. 1776. June.

While in this manner the divisions arising from differences in national origin and in wealth were thrown down,

the conference, at the instance of Christopher Marshall, who had been educated among the Friends, and had left the society, because he held it right to draw the sword in defence of civil liberty, resolved that the members elected to the convention should be required to declare their faith in God the Father, Christ his eternal Son, and the Holy Spirit, and in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. For this he was much censured; but the pure-minded mystic would not perceive that he was justifying the exclusiveness of the Catholic and of the Anglican church.

1776. June. It had not been the intention of the conference to perform administrative acts; yet, to repair the grievous neglect of the assembly, they ordered a flying camp of six thousand men to be called out, in conformity to the vote of the continental congress.

One thing more remained: on the afternoon of the twenty-fourth, on the report of a committee composed of Mackean, Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia, and James Smith of York county, the conference, with perfect unanimity, all its members giving their voices one by one, pronounced, in behalf of themselves and their constituents, their willingness to concur in a vote of congress declaring the united colonies to be free and independent states; and a copy of their vote, having been signed at the table, was, by Mackean the president, delivered directly to congress.

Far happier were the people of Maryland, for they acted with moderation and unanimity; their counsels sprung from a sense of right, and from sympathy with their sister colonies, especially Virginia. Chase, now the foremost civilian in Maryland, the ablest of their delegates in the continental congress, a friend to law not less than to liberty, ever attracted towards the lovers of established government, had always, on the question of independence, kept ahead of men who otherwise agreed with him. Guided by his clear understanding and vehement will, the patriots of all classes, the most eager and the laggard, joined hands. In May and the early part of June, the people, in county meetings, renounced the hope of reconciliation; listening to their voices, the committee of safety called a convention; and that body,

assembling on the twenty-first of June, placed itself in the closest relations with its constituents. On the request of any one delegate, the yeas and nays might be taken and entered in its journal; its debates and proceedings were public. Its measures for calling its militia into active service were prompt and efficient. On the afternoon of the day on which Moultrie repelled the British squadron from Charleston, it concurred with Virginia on the subject of independence, a confederation, treaties with foreign powers, and the reservation of the internal government of each colony to its own people; and five days later, while the continental congress was still considering the form of its declaration of independence, it directed the election of a new convention, to create a government by the authority of the people only.

1776. July.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE RESOLUTION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE FIRST AND SECOND OF JULY, 1776.

ON the morning of the first of July, the day set apart for considering the resolution of independence, John Adams, confident as if the vote had been taken, invoked the blessing of Heaven to make the new-born republic more glorious than any which had gone before. His heart melted with sorrow at the sufferings of the army that had been in Canada; he knew that England, having recovered that province, commanded the upper lakes and the Mississippi; that she had a free communication with all the tribes of Indians along the frontiers of all the colonies, and would induce them by bloodshed and fire to drive in the inhabitants upon the middle settlements, at a time when the coasts might be ravaged by the British navy, and a single day might bring the army before New York. Independence could be obtained only by a great expense of life; but the greater the danger, the stronger was his determination; for a free constitution of civil government could not be purchased at too dear a rate. He called to mind the fixed rule of the Romans, never to send or receive ambassadors to treat of peace with their enemies while their affairs were in a disastrous situation; and he was cheered by the belief that his countrymen were of the same temper and principle.

1776. July 1.

At the appointed hour, the members, probably on that day fifty in number, appeared in their places; among them, the delegates lately chosen in New Jersey. The great occasion had brought forth superior statesmen; men who joined the power of moderation to energy. After they had

all passed away, their longevity was remarked as a proof of their calm and temperate nature; full two thirds of the New England representatives lived beyond seventy years; some of them to be eighty or ninety. Every colony was found to be represented, and the delegates of all but one had received full power of action. Comprehensive instructions, reaching the question of independence without explicitly using the word, had been given by Massachusetts in January, by South Carolina in March, by Georgia on the fifth of April. North Carolina, in the words of Cornelius Harnett, on the twelfth of April, was the first to direct expressly its representatives in congress to concur in a declaration of independence. On the first of May, Massachusetts expunged the regal style from all public proceedings, and substituted the name of her "government and people;" on the fourth, Rhode Island more explicitly renounced allegiance, and made its delegates the representatives of an independent republic; Virginia on the fifteenth, the very day on which John Adams in congress carried his measure for instituting governments by the sole authority of the people, ordered her delegates at Philadelphia to propose independence, and by a circular letter communicated her resolve to all her sister colonies. The movement of Virginia was seconded almost in her words by Connecticut on the fourteenth of June, New Hampshire on the fifteenth, New Jersey on the twenty-first, the conference of committees of Pennsylvania on the twenty-fourth, Maryland on the twenty-eighth. Delaware on the twenty-second of March had still hoped for conciliation; but on the fifteenth of June she instructed her delegates to concur in forming further compacts between the united colonies, concluding treaties with foreign powers, and adopting such other measures as should be deemed necessary for promoting the liberty, safety, and interests of America. The vote of the eleventh of June showed the purpose of New York; but, under the accumulation of dangers, her statesmen waited a few days longer, that her voice for independence might have the full authority of her people.

1776. July 1.

The business of the day began with reading various letters,

among others one from Washington, who returned the whole number of his men, present and fit for duty, including the one regiment of artillery, at seven thousand seven hundred and fifty-four. Of near fourteen hundred, the firelocks were bad; more than eight hundred had none at all; three thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, more than half the whole number of infantry, had no bayonets. Of the militia who had been called for, only about a thousand had joined the camp; and with this force the general was to defend extensive lines against an army, near at hand, of thirty thousand veterans. An express from Lee made known that fifty-three ships, with Clinton, had arrived before Charleston, of which the safety was involved in doubt.

1776. July 1.

A more cheering letter, which Chase had forwarded by express from Annapolis, brought the first news of the unanimity of the Maryland convention, whose vote for independence was produced and read.

The order of the day came next, and congress resolved itself "into a committee of the whole to take into consideration the resolution respecting independency." For a few minutes, silence prevailed. In the absence of the mover of the resolution, the eyes of every one turned towards its seconder, John Adams; and the new members from New Jersey requested that the arguments used in former debates might be recapitulated. He had made no preparation for that morning; but for many months independence had been the chief object of his thoughts and his discourse, and the strongest arguments ranged themselves before his mind in their natural order. Of his sudden, impetuous, unpremeditated speech, no minutes ever existed, and no report was made. It is only remembered that he set forth the justice and the necessity, the seasonableness and the advantages of a separation from Great Britain; he dwelt on the neglect and insult with which their petitions had been treated by the king; and on the vindictive spirit manifested in the employment of German troops whose arrival was hourly expected. He concluded by urging the present time as the most suitable for resolving on independence, inasmuch as it

had become the first wish and the last instruction of the communities they represented.

Dickinson of Pennsylvania rose, not so much to reply as to justify himself before congress. He took pride in being the ardent assertor of freedom, and was conscious that his writings had won him a great name. Accustomed to lead, he loved to be recognised as the guide. Now for the first time in his life his excessively sensitive nature was writhing under the agonies of wounded self-love. For one year he had been at variance with John Adams, and during all that time had till recently triumphed over him or kept him at bay; congress had loved to employ his pen and to follow his counsel; at last he had been baffled even in his own province. He had seen the proprietary government go to its long sleep in the house of its friends; he had seen a delegate from Delaware bring before congress from the Pennsylvania conference instructions in favor of independence, which he did not mean to regard; and he had prepared himself with the utmost care to vindicate his opinions, which he would have held it guilt to suppress. It is from the report made by himself that I abridge his elaborate discourse, using no words but his own: 1776. July 1.

"I value the love of my country as I ought, but I value my country more, and I desire this illustrious assembly to witness the integrity, if not the policy, of my conduct. The first campaign will be decisive of the controversy. The declaration will not strengthen us by one man, or by the least supply, while it may expose our soldiers to additional cruelties and outrages. Without some prelusory trials of our strength, we ought not to commit our country upon an alternative, where to recede would be infamy, and to persist might be destruction.

"No instance is recollected of a people, without a battle fought or an ally gained, abrogating for ever their connection with a warlike commercial empire. It might unite the different parties in Great Britain against us, and it might create disunion among ourselves.

"With other powers it would rather injure than avail us. Foreign aid will not be obtained but by our actions in the

field, which are the only evidences of our union and vigor that will be respected. In the war between the united provinces and Spain, France and England assisted the provinces before they declared themselves independent; if it is the interest of any European kingdom to aid us, we shall be aided without such a declaration; if it is not, we shall not be aided with it. Before such an irrevocable step shall be taken, we ought to know the disposition of the great powers, and how far they will permit any one or more of them to interfere. The erection of an independent empire on this continent is a phenomenon in the world; its effects will be immense, and may vibrate round the globe. How they may affect, or be supposed to affect, old establishments, is not ascertained. It is singularly disrespectful to France to make the declaration before her sense is known, as we have sent an agent expressly to inquire whether such a declaration would be acceptable to her, and we have reason to believe he is now arrived at the court of Versailles. The measure ought to be delayed, till the common interests shall in the best manner be consulted by common consent. Besides, the door to accommodation with Great Britain ought not to be shut, until we know what terms can be obtained from some competent power. Thus to break with her before we have compacted with another is to make experiments on the lives and liberties of my countrymen, which I would sooner die than agree to make; at best, it is to throw us into the hands of some other power, and to lie at mercy, for we shall have passed the river that is never to be repassed. We ought to retain the declaration, and remain masters of our own fame and fate. We ought to inform that power that we are filled with a just detestation of our oppressors; that we are determined to cast off for ever all subjection to them, to declare ourselves independent, and to support that declaration with our lives and fortunes, provided that power will approve the proceeding, acknowledge our independence, and enter into a treaty with us upon equitable and advantageous conditions.

1776. July 1.

"Other objections to the declaration at this time are suggested by our internal circumstances. The formation of

our governments, and an agreement upon the terms of our confederation, ought to precede the assumption of our station among sovereigns. A sovereignty composed of several distinct bodies of men, not subject to established constitutions, and not combined together by confirmed articles of union, is such a sovereignty as has never appeared. These particulars would not be unobserved by foreign kingdoms and states, and they will wait for other proofs of political energy before they will treat us with the desired attention. 1776. July 1.

"With respect to ourselves, the consideration is still more serious. The forming of our governments is a new and difficult work. When this is done, and the people perceive that they and their posterity are to live under well-regulated constitutions, they will be encouraged to look forward to independence, as completing the noble system of their political happiness. The objects nearest to them are now enveloped in clouds, and those more distant appear confused; the relation one citizen is to bear to another, and the connection one state is to have with another, they do not, cannot, know. Mankind are naturally attached to plans of government that promise quiet and security. General satisfaction with them, when formed, would indeed be a great point attained; but persons of reflection will perhaps think it absolutely necessary that congress should institute some mode for preserving them from future discords.

"The confederation ought to be settled before the declaration of independence. Foreigners will think it most regular; the weaker states will not be in so much danger of having disadvantageous terms imposed upon them by the stronger. If the declaration is first made, political necessities may urge on the acceptance of conditions, highly disagreeable to parts of the union. The present comparative circumstances of the colonies are now tolerably well understood; but some have very extraordinary claims to territory, that, if admitted, as they might be in a future confederation, the terms of it not being yet adjusted, all idea of the present comparison between them would be confounded. Those whose boundaries are acknowledged would sink in pro-

portion to the elevation of their neighbors. Besides, the unlocated lands, not comprehended within acknowledged boundaries, are deemed a fund sufficient to defray a vast part, if not the whole, of the expenses of the war. These ought to be considered as the property of all, acquired by the arms of all. For these reasons the boundaries of the colonies ought to be fixed before the declaration, and their respective rights mutually guaranteed; and the unlocated lands ought also, previous to that declaration, to be solemnly appropriated to the benefit of all; for it may be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to obtain these decisions afterwards. Upon the whole, when things shall be thus deliberately rendered firm at home and favorable abroad, then let America, 'Attollens humeris famam et fata nepotum,' bearing up her glory and the destiny of her descendants, advance with majestic steps and assume her station among the sovereigns of the world."

Wilson of Pennsylvania could no longer agree with his colleague. He had at an early day foreseen independence as the probable though not the intended result of the contest; he had uniformly declared in his place that he never would vote for it contrary to his instructions, nay, that he regarded it as something more than presumption to take a step of such importance without express instructions and authority. "For," said he, "ought this act to be the act of four or five individuals, or should it be the act of the people of Pennsylvania?" But now that their authority was communicated by the conference of committees, he stood on very different ground.

1776. July 1.

A little before the end of the debate rose Witherspoon, of New Jersey. In a short speech, he remarked that though he had not heard all the discussions in that body, yet he had not wanted ample sources of information, and that in his judgment the country was not only ripe for independence, but was in danger of becoming rotten for want of it, if its declaration were longer delayed. Others spoke; among them probably Paca of Maryland, Mackean of Delaware, and undoubtedly Edward Rutledge of South Carolina; but I have not met with any authentic record of

their remarks. Richard Henry Lee and Wythe were both on that day attendants on the Virginia convention in Williamsburg. Before the vote was taken, the delegates from New York, of whom all but Alsop were personally ready to vote for independence and were confident of the adhesion of their constituents, read to the committee a letter which they had received from the provincial congress, explaining why their formal concurrence must, for a few days longer, be withheld. The resolution for independence was then sustained by nine colonies, two thirds of the whole number; the vote of South Carolina, unanimously it would seem, was in the negative; so was that of Pennsylvania, by the vote of Dickinson, Morris, Humphreys, and Willing, against Franklin, Morton, and Wilson; owing to the absence of Rodney, Delaware was divided, each member voting under the new instruction according to his former known opinion, Mackean for independence and Read against it. 1776. July 1.

The committee rose, and Harrison reported the resolution; but at the request of Edward Rutledge, on behalf of South Carolina, the determination upon it was put off till the next day.

A letter from Washington, of the twenty-ninth of June, was then read, from which it appeared that Howe and forty-five ships or more, laden with troops, had arrived at Sandy Hook, and that the whole fleet was expected in a day or two. "I am hopeful," wrote the general, "that I shall get some re-enforcements before they are prepared to attack; be that as it may, I shall make the best disposition I can of our troops." Not all who were round him had firmness like his own; Reed, the new adjutant-general, quailed before the inequality of the British and American force, and thus on the fourth described the state of the American camp: "With an army of force before, and a secret one behind, we stand on a point of land, with six thousand old troops, if a year's service of about half can entitle them to the name, and about fifteen hundred new levies of this province, many disaffected and more doubtful; every man, from the general to the private, acquainted

with our true situation, is exceedingly discouraged; had I known the true posture of affairs, no consideration would have tempted me to have taken an active part in this scene; and this sentiment is universal." No one knew better than the commander in chief the exceedingly discouraging aspect of military affairs; but his serene and unfaltering courage in this hour was a support to congress. His letter was referred to the board of war, which they had recently established, and of which John Adams was the president; the faculties of the members were too intensely strained by their enthusiasm to be much agitated by reports of danger. Especially John Adams, revolving the incidents of the day at its close, not disguising to his own mind the approaching conflict of which America could not ward off the calamities, not even flattering himself with halcyon days among the colonies after their separation from Great Britain, was content with what he had done; for freedom was in his eyes a counterbalance to poverty, discord, and war.

1776. July 2. On the second of July there were present in congress probably forty-nine members. Rodney had arrived from Delaware, and, joining Mackean, secured that colony. Dickinson and Morris stayed away, which enabled Franklin, Wilson, and Morton, of Pennsylvania, to outvote Willing and Humphreys. The South Carolina members, still uncertain if Charleston had not fallen, for the sake of unanimity, came round; so, though New York was still unable to vote, twelve colonies, with no dissenting one, resolved: "That these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."

At the end of this great day, the mind of John Adams heaved like the ocean after a storm. "The greatest question," he wrote, "was decided which ever was debated in America, and a greater, perhaps, never was nor will be decided among men. When I look back to 1761, and run through the series of political events, the chain of causes

and effects, I am surprised at the suddenness as well as greatness of this revolution. Britain has been filled with folly, and America with wisdom. It is the will of Heaven that the two countries should be sundered for ever; it may be the will of Heaven that America shall suffer calamities still more wasting and distresses yet more dreadful. If this is to be the case, the furnace of affliction produces refinement in states as well as individuals; but I submit all my hopes and fears to an overruling Providence, in which, unfashionable as the faith may be, I firmly believe.

"Had a declaration of independence been made seven months ago, we might before this hour have formed alliances with foreign states; we should have mastered Quebec, and been in possession of Canada; but, on the other hand, the delay has many great advantages attending it. The hopes of reconciliation which were fondly entertained by multitudes of the honest and well-meaning, 1776. July 2. though weak and mistaken, have been gradually and at last totally extinguished. Time has been given for the whole people maturely to consider the great question of independence, so that in every colony of the thirteen they have now adopted it as their own act.

"But the day is passed. The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epocha in the history of America; to be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival, commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty, from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward for evermore.

"You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. I am well aware of the toil and blood and treasure that it will cost us to maintain this declaration, and support and defend these states; yet, through all the gloom, I can see the rays of light and glory; that the end is worth all the means; that posterity will triumph in that day's transaction, even though we should rue it, which I trust in God we shall not."

CHAPTER LXX.

THE DECLARATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

JULY 2–4, 1776.

THE resolution of congress changed the old thirteen British colonies into free and independent states. It remained to set forth the reason for this act, and the principles which the new people would own as their guides. Of the committee appointed for that duty, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia had received the largest number of votes, and was in that manner singled out to draft the confession of faith of the rising empire. He owed this distinction to respect for the colony which he represented, to the consummate ability of the state papers which he had already written, and to that general favor which follows merit, modesty, and a sweet disposition; but the quality which specially fitted him for the task was the sympathetic character of his nature, by which he was able with instinctive perception to read the soul of the nation, and, having collected its best thoughts and noblest feelings, to give them out in clear and bold words, mixed with so little of himself, that his country, as it went along with him, found nothing but what it recognised as its own. No man of his century had more trust in the collective reason and conscience of his fellow-men, or better knew how to take their counsel; and in return he came to be a ruler over the willing in the world of opinion. Born to an independent fortune, he had from his youth been an indefatigable student. "The glow of one warm thought was worth more to him than money." Of a hopeful temperament and a tranquil, philosophic cast of mind, always temperate in his mode of life and decorous in his manners, he was a perfect master

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of his passions. He was of a delicate organization, and fond of elegance; his tastes were refined; laborious in his application to business or the pursuit of knowledge, music, the most spiritual of all pleasures of the senses, was his favorite recreation; and he took a never-failing delight in the varied beauty of rural life, building himself a home in the loveliest region of his native state. He was a skilful horseman, and with elastic step would roam the mountains on foot. The range of his studies was very wide; he was not unfamiliar with the literature of Greece and Rome; had an aptitude for mathematics and mechanics, and loved especially the natural sciences; scorning nothing but metaphysics. British governors and officials had introduced into Williamsburg the prevalent free-thinking of Englishmen of that century, and Jefferson had grown up in its atmosphere; he was not only a hater of priestcraft and superstition and bigotry and intolerance, he was thought to be indifferent to religion; yet his instincts all inclined him to trace every fact to a general law, and to put faith in ideal truth; the world of the senses did not bound his aspirations, and he believed more than he himself was aware of. He was an idealist in his habits of thought and life, as indeed is every one who has an abiding and thorough confidence in the people; and he was kept so in spite of circumstances by the irresistible bent of his character. He had great power in mastering details as well as in searching for general principles. His profession was that of the law, in which he was methodical, painstaking, and successful; at the same time, he pursued it as a science, and was well read in the law of nature and of nations. Whatever he had to do, it was his custom to prepare himself for it carefully; and in public life, when others were at fault, they often found that he had already hewed out the way; so that in council men willingly gave him the lead, which he never appeared to claim, and was always able to undertake. But he rarely spoke in public, and was less fit to engage in the war of debate than calmly to sum up its conclusions. It was a beautiful trait in his character that he was free from envy; had he kept silence, there would have been wanting

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to John Adams the best witness to his greatness as the ablest advocate and defender of independence. A common object now riveted the two statesmen together in close bonds. I cannot find that at that period Jefferson had an enemy; by the general consent of Virginia, he stood first among her civilians. Just thirty-three years old, married, and happy in his family, affluent, with a bright career before him, he was no rash innovator by his character or his position; if his convictions drove him to demand independence, it was only because he could no longer live with honor under the British "constitution, which he still acknowledged to be better than all that had preceded it." His enunciation of general principles was fearless; but he was no visionary devotee of abstract theories, which, like disembodied souls, escape from every embrace; the nursling of his country, the offspring of his time, he set about the work of a practical statesman, and his measures grew so naturally out of previous law and the facts of the past that they struck deep root and have endured.

1776. July 2-4. From the fulness of his own mind, without consulting one single book, yet having in his memory the example of the Swiss and of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, Jefferson drafted the declaration, in which, after citing the primal principles of government, he presented the complaints of the United States against England in the three classes of the iniquitous use of the royal prerogative, the usurpation of legislative power over America by the king in parliament, and the measures for enforcing the pretended acts of legislation. He submitted the paper separately to Franklin and to John Adams, accepted from each of them one or two verbal, unimportant corrections, and on the twenty-eighth of June reported it to congress, which now on the second of July, immediately after adopting the resolution of independence, entered upon its consideration. During the remainder of that day, and the next two, the language, the statements, and the principles of the paper were closely scanned.

In the indictment against George III., Jefferson had written:

"He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And, that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished dye, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them; thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another."

These words expressed with precision what had happened in Virginia; she, as well as other colonies, had perseveringly attempted to repress the slave-trade; the king had perseveringly used his veto to protect it; the governor, clothed with the king's authority, had invited slaves to rise against their masters; but it could not be truly said that all the colonies had been always without blame in regard to the commerce, or that in America it had been exclusively the guilt of the king of Great Britain; and therefore the severe strictures on the use of the king's negative, so Jefferson wrote for the guidance of history, "were disapproved by some southern gentlemen, whose reflections were not yet matured to the full abhorrence of that traffic; and the offensive expressions were immediately yielded. Congress had already manifested its own sentiments by the absolute prohibition of the slave-trade; and that prohibition was then respected in every one of the thirteen states, including South Carolina and Georgia. This is the occasion when the slave-trade was first branded as a piracy. Many statesmen, among them Edmund Pendleton, president of the Virginia convention, always regretted that the passage had been

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stricken out; and the earnestness of the denunciation lost its author no friends.

All other changes and omissions in Jefferson's paper were either insignificant or much for the better, rendering its language more terse, more dispassionate, and more exact; and in the evening of the fourth day of July, New York still abstaining from the vote, twelve states, without one negative, agreed to this "Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

1776. July 4. "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world : 1776. July 4.

"He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

"He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

"He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature; a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

"He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

"He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

"He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the mean time, exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.

"He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

"He has obstructed the administration of justice by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

"He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

"He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

"He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislature.

"He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

"He has combined with others" [that is, with the lords and commons of Britain] "to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation: For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us: For protecting them by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states: For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world: For imposing taxes on us without our consent: For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury: For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences: For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies: For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering, fundamentally, the forms of our governments: For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

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"He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

"He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

"He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

"He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become

the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

"He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

"In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. 1776. July 4.

"Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must therefore acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

"We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as Free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this declaration,

with a firm reliance on the protection of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

This immortal state paper was "the genuine effusion of the soul of the country at that time," the revelation of its mind, when, in its youth, its enthusiasm, its sublime confronting of danger, it rose to the highest creative powers of which man is capable. The bill of rights which it promulgates is of rights that are older than human institutions, and spring from the eternal justice. Two political theories divided the world: one founded the commonwealth on the advantages of the state, the policy of expediency, the other on the immutable principles of morals; the new republic, as it took its place among the powers of the world, proclaimed its faith in the truth and reality and unchangeableness of freedom, virtue, and right. The heart of Jefferson in writing the declaration, and of congress in adopting it, beat for all humanity; the assertion of right was made for the entire world of mankind and all coming generations, without any exception whatever; for the proposition which admits of exceptions can never be self-evident. As it was put forth in the name of the ascendent people of that time, it was sure to make the circuit of the world, passing everywhere through the despotic countries of Europe; and the astonished nations, as they read that all men are created equal, started out of their lethargy, like those who have been exiles from childhood, when they suddenly hear the dimly remembered accents of their mother tongue.

1776. July 4.

In the next place, the declaration, avoiding specious and vague generalities, grounds itself with anxious care upon the past, and reconciles right and fact. Of universal principles, enough is repeated to prove that America chose for her own that system of politics which recognises the rule of eternal justice; and independence is vindicated by the application of that rule to the grievous instructions, laws, and acts, proceeding from the king, in the exercise of his prerogative, or in concurrence with the lords and commons of Great Britain. The colonies professed to drive back

innovations; and not, with roving zeal, to overturn all traditional inequalities; they were no rebels against the past, of which they knew the present to be the child; with all the glad anticipations of greatness that broke forth from the prophetic soul of the youthful nation, they took their point of departure from the world as it was. They did not even declare against monarchy itself; they sought no general overthrow of all kings, no universal system of republics; nor did they cherish in their hearts a lurking hatred against princes. Till within a few years or months, loyalty to the house of Hanover had been to them another name for the love of civil and religious liberty; the British constitution, the best system that had ever been devised for the security of liberty and property by a representative government. Neither Franklin, nor Washington, nor John Adams, nor Jefferson, nor Jay, had ever expressed a preference for a republic. The voices that rose for independence spoke also for alliances with kings. The sovereignty of George III. was renounced, not because he was a king, but because he was deemed to be "a tyrant." 1776. July 4.

The insurgents, as they took up self-government, manifested no impatience at the recollection of having been ruled by a royal line, no eagerness to blot out memorials of their former state; they sent forth no Hugh Peter to recommend to the mother country the abolition of monarchy, which no one seems to have proposed or to have wished; in the moment of revolution in America, they did not counsel the English to undertake a revolution. The republic was to America a godsend; it came, though unsought, because society contained the elements of no other organization. Here, and, in that century, here only, was a people, which, by its education and large and long experience, was prepared to act as the depositary and carrier of all political power. America developed her choice from within herself; and therefore it is that, conscious of following an inner law, she never made herself a propagandist of her system, where the conditions of success were wanting.

Finally, the declaration was not only the announcement of the birth of a people, but the establishment of a national

government; a most imperfect one, it is true, but still a government, in conformity with the limited constituent powers which each colony had conferred upon its delegates in congress. The war was no longer a civil war; Britain was become to the United States a foreign country. Every former subject of the British king in the thirteen colonies now owed primary allegiance to the dynasty of the people, and became a citizen of the new republic; except in this, every thing remained as before; every man retained his rights; the colonies did not dissolve into a state of nature; nor did the new people undertake a social revolution. The management of the internal police and government was carefully reserved to the separate states, which could, each for itself, enter upon the career of domestic reforms. But the states which were henceforth independent of Britain were not independent of one another: the United States of America, presenting themselves to mankind as one people, assumed powers over war, peace, foreign alliances, and commerce.

1776. July 4.

The declaration was not signed by the members of congress on the day on which it was agreed to, but it was duly authenticated by the president and secretary, and published to the world. The nation, when it made the choice of its great anniversary, selected not the day of the resolution of independence, when it closed the past, but that of the declaration of the principles on which it opened its new career.



THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

EPOCH FOURTH.

THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA IS ACKNOWLEDGED.

1776–1782.



THE INDEPENDENCE

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IS ACKNOWLEDGED.

CHAPTER I.

THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES.

JULY, 1776.

THE American Declaration of Independence was the beginning of new ages. Though it had been invited, expected, and prepared for, its adoption changed the contest from a war for the redress of grievances to an effort at the creation of a self-governing commonwealth. It disembarrassed the people of the United States from the legal fiction of owning a king against whom they were in arms, brushed away for ever the illusion of a reconcilement to the dominion of Britain, and for the first time set before them a well-defined, single, and inspiring purpose. As the youthful nation took its seat among the powers of the earth, hope whispered the assurance of unheard of success in the pursuit of public happiness through faith in the rights of man. 1776. July.

Before receiving the declaration, the convention of Maryland, on the sixth of July, yielded to "the dire necessity" of renouncing a king who had violated his compact, and "conjured every virtuous citizen to join cordially in maintaining the freedom of Maryland and her sister colonies."

Two days later, the committee of safety and that of inspection at Philadelphia marched in procession to the state-

house, where the declaration was read to the battalions of volunteers and a concourse of the inhabitants of the city and county; after which, the emblems of royalty were taken down from the halls where justice had hitherto been administered in the king's name, and were burnt amidst the acclamations of the crowd, while merry chimes from the churches and peals from the state-house bell proclaimed liberty throughout the land.

1776. July.

The ravages of immediate war that overhung New Jersey were distinctly foreseen by her statesmen, who dared not trust "that their numbers, union, or valor, or any thing short of the almighty power of God could save them;" but the congress of that state, in presence of the committee of safety, the militia under arms, and a great assembly of the people, having faith in "an interposing Providence," and an inward witness to the vitality of their political principles, published simultaneously at Trenton the declaration of independence and their own new constitution.

On the morning of the ninth, the newly elected convention of New York, invested with full powers from the people, assembled at White Plains, chose as president Nathaniel Woodhull of Suffolk county, a man of courage and discriminating mind, and listened to the reading of the declaration of independence. In the afternoon they met again, thirty-eight in number, among whom were Woodhull, Jay, Van Cortlandt, Lewis Morris, Gouverneur Morris, Gansevoort, Sloss Hobart, the Presbyterian minister Keteltas, and other representatives of the Dutch, English, and Huguenot elements of the state. The British were concentrating their strength near that one colony alone, so as to invade it from Lake Champlain and from the sea. Already a numerous and well-appointed British force lay encamped on Staten Island, and, with the undisputed command of the water, menaced the city of New York; the militia of Staten Island, to the number of four hundred, had sworn allegiance to the king; Long Island must yield; the royalists were confident that the army of Howe might penetrate the interior, get the main body of the American levies between them and the sea, form a junction with the British troops

which were expected from Canada, and before the end of the year crush the state into subjection. There was no chance of ultimate success for the inhabitants of New York but through years of sorrow, during which they were sure to be impoverished, and on every part of their territory to meet death from regular troops and partisans and savages. If resistance to the end should be chosen, Lewis Morris must abandon his fine estate to the unsparing ravages of the enemy; Woodhull, whose days were numbered, could not hope to save his constituents from immediate subjection; Jay must prepare to see his aged father and mother driven from their home at Rye, and, with the sensitiveness and infirmities of age, pine away and die as wanderers; the men from Tryon county, which then included all the western part of the state, knew that their vote would let loose the Indian with his scalping-knife along their border. But they all wisely trusted in the unconquerable spirit of those by whom they had been elected. The leading part fell to Jay. On his report, the convention with one voice, while they lamented the cruel necessity for "independence, approved it, and joined in supporting it at the risk of their lives and fortunes." They directed it to be published with the beat of drum at White Plains, and in every district of the state; empowered their delegates in congress to act for the happiness and the welfare of the United States of America; and named themselves the representatives of the people of the state of New York. By this decree the union of the old thirteen colonies was consummated; and New York, long with the cup of misery at her lips, ever remained true to her pledge. 1776. July.

In announcing independence to the generals and the divisions of the continental army at distant posts, the commander in chief attributed to necessity and the repetition of insufferable injuries the dissolution of the connection with Great Britain; at the same time, he asserted the perpetual claim of the colonists to "the privileges of nature" and "the rights of humanity." The declaration was read on the ninth to every brigade in New York city, and received with the most hearty approbation. In the evening,

a mob, composed in part of soldiers, threw down the equestrian statue of George III. which stood in the Bowling Green, and the lead of which it was formed was cut in pieces to be run into bullets. The riot offended Washington, and was rebuked in general orders.

1776. July. On the same day which saw New York join the union, the royal governor of Virginia left his moorage near Gwynn's Island, where he had lingered from the twenty-fourth of May in the constant hope of relief. Neglected by the troops which had passed by him for the Carolinas, his last resource was in the negroes whom he had enlisted; and, of these, five hundred, or about one half of the whole number, had perished from the small-pox and a malignant ship-fever. He lay between the island and the main, within range of two small batteries which had just been finished. Lewis, who had had no part in their construction, arrived just in time to put the match to the first gun. Every shot struck Dunmore's ship, and did such execution that the men soon refused to stand to their guns; not a breath of air was stirring, but he was obliged to cut his cable, and trust to the little tide to drift him from the shore. Of the tenders, one was burnt and another taken. On the eleventh the island was abandoned; and the ill-provided fleet rode at anchor near the mouth of the Potomac. Here a gale sprung up, which wrecked several of the small crafts, and drove a sloop on shore, where it fell into the hands of "the rebels." To disencumber himself of every thing but the transports, the governor advised all those who had placed themselves under his protection to seek safety by flight; and they scattered immediately for Great Britain, the West Indies, and St. Augustine. This confession of his inability to take care of those who had come to him for refuge, when contrasted with his passionate boastings and threats, exposed him to contempt; his use of black allies inflamed the southern colonies, without benefit to the crown.

Dunmore roved about for some weeks longer in the waters of the Chesapeake, vainly awaiting help; but no hostile foot rested on the soil of Virginia, when, on the twenty-fifth, the declaration of independence was read in

Williamsburg at the capitol, the court-house, and the palace, or when it was proclaimed by the sheriff of each county at the door of his court-house on the first ensuing court-day. In Rhode Island, it was announced successively at Newport, East Greenwich, and Providence, where it called forth loud huzzas for "free trade with all the world, American manufactures, and the diffusion of liberty o'er and o'er the globe." The thriving city of Baltimore was illuminated for joy. At Ticonderoga, the soldiers under Saint-Clair shouted with rapture: "Now we are a free people, and have a name among the states of the world." In Massachusetts, the great state paper was published from the pulpit on a Lord's Day by each minister to his congregation, and was entered at length on the records of the towns. The assembly of South Carolina, while they deplored "the unavoidable necessity" of independence, accepted its declaration "with unspeakable pleasure."

Independence had sprung from the instructions of the people; it was now accepted and confirmed as their own work in cities and villages, in town-meetings and legislatures, in the camp and the training-field. The civilized world had the deepest interest in the result; for it involved the reform of the British parliament, the emancipation of Ireland, the overthrow of feudalism in France, the awakening of the nations of Europe. Even Hungary stretched forward to hear from the distance the gladsome sound; and Italians recalled their days of unity and might. Thirteen states had risen up, free from foreign influence, to create their own civil institutions, and join together as one. The report went out among all nations, so that the effort, whatever might follow, could never fade away from the memory of the human race. 1776. July.

The arrow had sped towards its mark, when Lord Howe entered upon the scene with his commission for restoring peace. As a naval officer, he added experience and skill to a wholesome severity of discipline and steady, cool, phlegmatic courage. Naturally taciturn, his manner of expression was confused. His profile was like that of his grandfather, George I.; his complexion was very dark; his

grim features had no stamp of superiority; but his face wore an expression of serene and passive fortitude. He was as unsuspicious as he was brave. Of an ingenuous disposition and a good heart, he sincerely designed to act as a mediator, not as a destroyer, and indulged in visions of riding about the country, conversing with its principal inhabitants, and restoring the king's authority by methods of moderation and concession. At Halifax, he told Admiral Arbuthnot "that peace would be made within ten days after his arrival." His fond wish to heal the breach led him to misconceive the extent of his commission. He thought himself possessed of large powers, and, with a simplicity which speaks for his sincerity, he did not discover how completely they were circumscribed or annulled. He could pardon individuals on their return to the king's protection, and could grant an amnesty to insurgent communities which should lay down their arms and dissolve all their governments. The only further privilege which his long altercation wrung from the ministry was a vague permission to converse with private men on their alleged grievances, and to report their opinions; but he could not judge of their complaints or promise that they would be heeded; and he was strictly forbidden to treat with the continental congress, or any provincial congress, or any civil or military officer holding their commission.

1776. July. In the evening of the twelfth Lord Howe reached Staten Island. His brother, who had impatiently expected him, was of the opinion "that a numerous body of the inhabitants of New York, the Jerseys, and Connecticut only waited for opportunities to prove their loyalty; but that peace could not be restored until the rebel army should be defeated." Lord Howe had confidence in himself, and did not lower his hopes. He had signed, while at sea, a declaration which had been sketched by Wedderburn in England, and which was the counterpart of his instructions. It announced his authority separately, not less than jointly with his brother, to grant free and general pardons; and it promised "due consideration to all persons who should aid in restoring tranquillity." On this weak profession, which

implied that the king and parliament had no boon to offer except forgiveness on submission, and no chance of obtaining advocates for peace but by methods of corruption, he relied for the swift and bloodless success of his mission.

The person with whom he most wished to hold intercourse was the American commander in chief. 1776. July. On the second day after his arrival, he sent a white flag up the harbor, with a copy of his declaration, enclosed in a letter addressed to Washington as a private man. But Washington, apart from his office, could not enter into a correspondence with the king's commissioner; and Reed and Webb, who went to meet the messenger, following their instructions, declined to receive the communication. Lord Howe was grieved at the rebuff; in the judgment of congress, Washington "acted with a dignity becoming his station."

On the same day, Lord Howe sent a flag across the Kill to Amboy, with copies of his declaration in circular letters to all the old royal governors south of New York, although nearly every one of those governors was a fugitive. The papers fell into the hands of Mercer, and through Washington were transmitted to congress.

Lord Howe tried also to advance his purpose by forwarding conciliatory letters written in England to persons in America. Those which he had concerted with De Berdt, son of the old agent of Massachusetts, to Kinsey of New Jersey and to Reed of Pennsylvania, were public in their nature, though private in their form, and were promptly referred by their recipients to congress. In them he suffered it to be said that he had for two months delayed sailing from England, in order to obtain an enlargement of his instructions; that he was disposed to treat; that he had power to compromise and adjust, and desired a parley with Americans on the footing of friends. Reed, who was already thoroughly sick of the contest, thought "the overture ought not to be rejected;" and through Robert Morris he offered most cheerfully to take such a part "on the occasion as his situation and abilities would admit."

The gloom that hung over the country was deepening its shades; one British corps after another was arriving; the

fleet commanded the waters of New York, and two ships-of-war had, on the twelfth, passed the American batteries with very little injury, ascending the Hudson River for the encouragement of the disaffected, and totally cutting off all intercourse by water between Washington's camp and Albany. Greene had once before warned John Adams of the hopelessness of the contest; again on the fourteenth, while facing the whole danger without dismay, he wrote: "I still think you are playing a desperate game."

1776. July. But, as the claim of absolute power by parliament to tax the colonies and to change their charters was not renounced, congress showed no wavering. "Lord Howe," reasoned Samuel Adams, "comes with terms disgraceful to human nature. If he is a good friend to man, as letters import, I am mistaken if he is not weak and ductile. He has always voted, as I am told, in favor of the king's measures in parliament, and at the same time professed himself a friend to the liberties of America. He seems to me either never to have had any good principles at all, or not to have presence of mind openly and uniformly to avow them." Robert Morris surrendered his interest and inclination to the ruling principle of his public life, resolved as a good citizen to follow if he could not lead, and thenceforward supported independence. As the only answer to Lord Howe, congress, on the nineteenth, resolved that its own state paper of the fourth of July should be engrossed on parchment as "the unanimous declaration of the thirteen UNITED STATES OF AMERICA," and signed by every one of its members. It further directed Lord Howe's circular letter and declaration to be published, "that the good people of these United States may be informed of what nature are the commissioners, and what the terms with the expectation of which the insidious court of Britain has endeavored to amuse and disarm them; and that the few who still remain suspended by a hope, founded either in the justice or moderation of their late king, may at length be convinced that the valor alone of their country is to save its liberties."

Before this decision could reach Washington, he had made his own opinions known. In reply to the resolution

of congress on the massacre of the prisoners who had capitulated at the Cedars, General Howe had, on the sixteenth, sent him a note, addressed to him without any recognition of his official station. The letter was for that reason not received; and on the twentieth a second letter was rejected, because its address was ambiguous; but, for the sake of coming to some agreement respecting prisoners, Paterson, its bearer, the British adjutant-general, was allowed to enter the American camp. After pledging the word of the British commander to grant to prisoners the rights of humanity, and to punish the officers who had broken their parole, he asked to have his visit accepted as the first advance from the commissioners for restoring peace, and asserted that they had great powers. "From what appears," rejoined Washington, "they have power only to grant pardons; having committed no fault, we need no pardon; we are only defending what we deem to be our indisputable rights."

To Franklin, as to a worthy friend, Lord Howe had sent assurances that to promote lasting peace and union formed "the great objects of his ambition." Franklin, after consulting congress, answered: "By a peace to be entered into between Britain and America, as distinct states, your nation might recover the greatest part of our growing commerce, with that additional strength to be derived from a friendship with us; but I know too well her abounding pride and deficient wisdom. Her fondness for conquest, her lust of dominion, and her thirst for a gainful monopoly, will join to hide her true interests from her eyes, and continually goad her on in ruinous distant expeditions, destructive both of lives and treasure. 1776. July.

"I have not the vanity, my lord, to think of intimidating by thus predicting the effects of this war; for I know it will in England have the fate of all my former predictions, not to be believed till the event shall verify it.

"Long did I endeavor, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve the British empire from breaking. Your lordship may remember the tears of joy that wet my cheek when, in London, you once gave me expectations that a reconciliation might soon take place. I had the misfortune

to find those expectations disappointed, and to be treated as the cause of the mischief I was laboring to prevent. My consolation under that groundless and malevolent treatment was that I retained the friendship of many of the wise and good men in that country, and, among the rest, some share in the regard of Lord Howe.

1776. July.

"The well-founded esteem and affection which I shall always have for your lordship makes it painful to me to see you engaged in conducting a war, the great ground of which, as expressed in your letter, is 'the necessity of preventing the American trade from passing into foreign channels.' Retaining a trade is not an object for which men may justly spill each other's blood; the true means of securing commerce is the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and the profit of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it by fleets and armies.

"This war against us is both unjust and unwise: posterity will condemn to infamy those who advised it; and even success will not save from some degree of dishonor those who voluntarily engaged to conduct it. I know your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in a conciliation; and I believe that, when you find that impossible on any terms given you to propose, you will relinquish so odious a command."

On the thirtieth, Lord Howe received this reply, which he well understood as expressing the opinion of congress. His countenance grew more sombre; tears glistened in his eyes; he looked within himself, and was conscious of aiming at a reconciliation on terms of honor and advantage to both parties. The truth began to dawn upon him, that he had been deceived into accepting a commission which gave him no power but to offer pardon. Why, then, should he, the greatest admiral of his day, come against a distant people whose hereditary good-will he longed not to forfeit, whose English privileges he respected, whose acknowledged wrongs he desired to see redressed? A manly and generous nature found itself in a false position: his honor as an officer was plighted to his king, and he must promote the subjugation of America by arms.

CHAPTER II.

CONFEDERATION; SIGNING THE DECLARATION.

JULY—AUGUST 2, 1776.

THE interview of the British adjutant-general with Washington led to one humane result. After the retreat from Concord in 1775, Gage consented to an exchange of prisoners; but, of those who fell into his hands at Bunker Hill, he wrote in August, under a different influence, that "their lives were destined to the cord." In December, Washington insinuated to the successor of Gage a wish for a cartel; but Howe evaded the proposal, awaiting the king's orders. From Quebec Carleton generously dismissed his captives on their parole. Meantime, the desire to release the British officers who had been taken by "the rebels," and still more a consideration of the difficulties which might occur in the case of foreign troops serving in America, led the British minister, in February, 1776, to instruct General Howe: "It cannot be that you should enter into any treaty or agreement with rebels for a regular cartel for exchange of prisoners, yet I doubt not but your own discretion will suggest to you the means of effecting such exchange without the king's dignity and honor being committed, or his majesty's name being used in any negotiation for that purpose." The secretary's letter was received in May at Halifax, and was followed by the proposal in July to give up a citizen carried away from Boston for a British subject held in arrest. Congress, on the twenty-second, voted its approval, and further empowered its commanders in each department to exchange prisoners of war: officer for officer of equal rank, soldier for soldier, sailor for sailor, and citizen for citizen. In this arrangement

1776. July.

Howe readily concurred; the choice of prisoners was to be made by the respective commanders for their own officers and men. On the part of the United States, the system was a public act of the highest authority; on that of the British government it had no more enduring sanction than the good-will of the British general, and did not even bind his successor. Interrupted by frequent altercations, it nevertheless prevailed during the war, and extended to captive privateers when they escaped impressment.

1776. July. Union was the cry of America. The draft of confederation, which on the twelfth of July was brought into congress, was in the handwriting of Dickinson, and had been begun before the end of June. The Farmer of Pennsylvania, dear to his country for his Letters, which had assisted to unite America and conciliate the wisest statesmen of England, was too delicately organized to take part in the rough work of the heat of the day.

The main hindrance to a strong confederation was the innate unwillingness of the separate states to give up power, combined with a jealousy of establishing it in other hands than their own. The public mind is of slow growth, and had not yet attained the wisdom necessary for regenerating its government. The Dutch and Swiss confederacies were the only models known to the people with detail and precision. There was not at that time one single statesman who fully comprehended the need of the country; but Dickinson, from his timorousness, his nice refining, his want of mastery over his erudition, his hostility to independence, his inconsolable grief at the overthrow of the proprietary authority in Pennsylvania by the action of congress, was peculiarly unfit to be the architect of a permanent national constitution; and, in his zeal to guard against the future predominance of the central power, he exaggerated the imperfections, which had their deep root in the history of the states.

For more than a century, and even from the foundation of the settlements, almost every English administration had studied to acquire the disposal of their military resources and their revenues; while every American legislature had had for its constant object the repression of the encroach-

ments of the crown. This antagonism, developed and confirmed by successive generations, had become the quick instinct and fixed habit of the people. All their patriotic traditions clustered round the story of their untiring resistance to the establishment of an overruling central force, and strengthened the conviction of the inherent danger of such a force to their vital principle of self-direction. Each one of the colonies connected its idea of freedom and safety with the exclusive privilege of managing its internal policy; and they delighted to keep fresh the proud memories of repeated victories won over the persistent attempt of the agents of an external supreme power to impose restrictions on their domestic autonomy.

This jealousy of control from without concentred in the subject of taxation. In raising a revenue, the colonies acknowledged in the king no function whatever except that of addressing to them severally a requisition; it was the great principle of their politics that to them alone belonged the discretion to grant and collect aids by their own separate acts. The confederacy now stood in the place of the crown as the central authority; and to that federal union the colonies, by general concurrence, proposed to confide only the same limited right. It was laid down as a fundamental article, that "the United States assembled shall never impose or levy any tax or duties," except for postage; and this restriction, such was the force of habit, was accepted without remark. No one explained the distinction between a sovereignty wielded by an hereditary king in another hemisphere, and a superior power which should be the chosen expression of the will and reason of the nation. The country had broken with the past in declaring independence; it went back into bondage to the past in forming its first constitution. 1776. July.

The withholding from the United States of the direct authority to raise a revenue was not peculiar to Dickinson; in all other respects, his plan was less efficient than that proposed the year before. Experience had shown that colonies often failed to be represented; Franklin's plan constituted one half of the members of congress a quorum,

and left the decision of every question to the majority of those who might be present; Dickinson knew only "the United States assembled;" counted every one of them which might chance to be unrepresented as a vote in the negative; required that not even a trivial matter should be determined except by the concurrence of seven colonies; and that measures of primary importance should await the assent of nine, that is of two thirds of the whole. If eight states only were present, no question relating to defence, peace, war, finances, army, or navy, could be transacted even by a unanimous vote; nor could a matter of smaller moment be settled by a majority of six to two. By common consent, congress was the channel through which amendments to the constitution were to be proposed: Franklin accepted all amendments that should be approved by a majority of the state assemblies; Dickinson permitted no change but by the consent of the legislature of every state. No executive apparatus distinct from the general congress could be detected in the system. Judicial power over questions arising between the states was provided for; and courts might be established to exercise primary jurisdiction over crimes committed on the high seas, with appellate jurisdiction over captures; but there was not even a rudimentary organ from which a court for executing the ordinances of the confederacy could be developed; and, as a consequence, there existed no real legislative authority. The congress could transact specific business, but not enact general laws; could publish a journal, but not a book of statutes.

1776. July.

Even this anarchical scheme, which was but the reflection of the long-cherished repugnance to central power, a reminiscence of the war-cries of former times, not a creation for the coming age, alarmed Edward Rutledge, who served with industry on the committee with Dickinson. He saw danger in the very thought of an indissoluble league of friendship between the states for their general welfare; saying privately, but deliberately: "If the plan now proposed should be adopted, nothing less than ruin to some colonies will be the consequence. The idea of destroying all pro-

vincial distinctions, and making every thing of the most minute kind bend to what they call the good of the whole, is in other terms to say that these colonies must be subject to the government of the eastern provinces. The force of their arms I hold exceeding cheap, but I confess I dread their overruling influence in council; I dread their low cunning, and those levelling principles which men without character and without fortune in general possess, which are so captivating to the lower class of mankind, and which will occasion such a fluctuation of property as to introduce the greatest disorder. I am resolved to vest the congress with no more power than what is absolutely necessary, and to keep the staff in our own hands; for I am confident, if surrendered into the hands of others, a most pernicious use will be made of it."

While the projected confederation was thus cavilled at with morbid distrust, its details offered questions of difficult solution. Dickinson, assuming population to be the index of wealth, proposed to obtain supplies by requisitions upon each state in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, excepting none but Indians not paying taxes. Chase moved to count only the "white inhabitants;" for "negroes were property, and no more members of the state than cattle." "Call the laboring poor freemen or slaves," said John Adams, "they increase the wealth and exports of the state as much in the one case as in the other, and should therefore add equally to the quota of its tax." Harrison, of Virginia, proposed as a compromise that two slaves should be counted as one freeman. "To exempt slaves from taxation," said Wilson, "will be the greatest encouragement to slave-keeping and the importation of slaves, on which it is our duty to lay every discouragement. Slaves increase profits, which the southern states take to themselves; they also increase the burden of defence, which must fall so much the more heavily on the northern. Slaves prevent freemen from cultivating a country. Dismiss your slaves, and freemen will take their places." "Freemen," said young Lynch, of South Carolina, "have neither the ability nor the inclination to do the work that

1776. July.

the negroes do. Our slaves are our property; if that is debated, there is an end of confederation. Being our property, why should they be taxed more than sheep?" "There is a difference," said Franklin; "sheep will never make insurrections." Witherspoon thought the value of lands and houses was the true barometer of the wealth of a people, and the criterion for taxation. Edward Rutledge objected to the rule of numbers because it included slaves, and because it exempted the wealth to be acquired by the eastern states as carriers for the southern. Hooper, of North Carolina, cited his own state as a striking exception to the rule that the riches of a country are in proportion to its numbers; and, commenting on the unprofitableness of slave labor, he expressed the wish to see slavery pass away. The amendment of Chase was rejected by a purely geographical vote of all the states north of Mason and Dixon's line against all those south of it, except that Georgia was divided. The confederation could not of itself levy taxes, and no rule for apportioning requisitions promised harmony.

A second article which divided the states related to the distribution of power in the general congress. Delaware, from the first, bound her delegates to insist that, "in declaring questions, each colony shall have one vote;" and that was the rule adopted by Dickinson. Chase saw the extreme danger of a hopeless conflict, and proposed as a compromise that in votes relating to money the voice of each state should be proportioned to the number of its inhabitants. Franklin insisted that they should be so proportioned in all cases; that it was unreasonable to set out with an unequal representation; that a confederation on the iniquitous principle of allowing to the smaller states an equal vote without their bearing equal burdens could not last long. "All agree," replied Witherspoon, "that there must and shall be a confederation for this war; in the enlightened state of men's minds, I hope for a lasting one. Our greatest danger is of disunion among ourselves. Nothing will come before congress but what respects colonies and not individuals. Every colony is a distinct person; and, if an equal vote be refused, the smaller states will be

1776. July.

vassals to the larger." "We must confederate," said Clark, of New Jersey, "or apply for pardons." "We should settle some plan of representation," said Wilson. John Adams agreed with Franklin: "We represent the people; and in some states they are many, in others they are few; the vote should be proportioned to numbers. The question is not whether the states are now independent individuals, making a bargain together, but what we ought to be when the bargain is made. The confederacy is to make us one individual only; to form us, like separate parcels of metal, into one common mass. We shall no longer retain our separate individuality, but become a single individual as to all questions submitted to the confederacy; therefore all those reasons which prove the justice and expediency of a proportional representation in other assemblies hold good here. An equal vote will endanger the larger states; while they, from their difference of products, of interest, and of manners, can never combine for the oppression of the smaller." Rush spoke on the same side: "We represent the people; we are a nation; to vote by states will keep up colonial distinctions; and we shall be loath to admit new colonies into the confederation. The voting by the number of free inhabitants will have the excellent effect of inducing the colonies to discourage slavery. If we vote by numbers, liberty will always be safe; the larger colonies are so providentially divided in situation as to render every fear of their combining visionary. The more a man aims at serving America, the more he serves his colony: I am not pleading the cause of Pennsylvania; I consider myself a citizen of America." Hopkins, of Rhode Island, pleaded for the smaller colonies: "The German body votes by states; so does the Helvetic; so does the Belgic. Virginia, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Maryland contain more than half the people; it cannot be expected that nine colonies will give way to four. The safety of the whole depends on the distinction of the colonies." "The vote," said Sherman, of Connecticut, "should be taken two ways: call the colonies, and call the individuals, and have a majority of both." This idea he probably derived from Jefferson, who

1776. July.

enforced in private, as the means to save the union, that "any proposition might be negatived by the representatives of a majority of the people, or of a majority of the colonies." Here is the thought out of which the great compromise of our constitution was evolved.

1776. July.

Aside from the permanent question of taxation and representation, what most stood in the way of an early act of union was the conflict of claims to the ungranted lands, which during the connection with Great Britain had belonged to the king. Reason and equity seemed to dictate that they should inure to the common benefit of all the states which joined to wrest them from the crown. The complete transfer of ownership from the dethroned authority to the general congress would, however, have been at variance with the fixed and undisputed idea that each state should have the exclusive control of its internal policy. It was therefore not questioned that each member of the confederacy had acquired the sole right to the public domain within its acknowledged limits; but it was proposed to vindicate to the United States the great territory northwest of the Ohio, by investing congress "with the exclusive power of limiting the bounds of those colonies which were said to extend to the South Sea, and ascertaining the bounds of any other that appeared to be indeterminate." Maryland, which had originally been formed out of Virginia, retained a grudge against the Old Dominion for its exorbitant appetite for western territory; and Chase argued strongly for the grant of power to limit the states. "Gentlemen shall not pare away Virginia," said Harrison, taking fire at the interference with its boundaries as defined by the second charter of James I. Stone, of Maryland, came to the rescue of his colleague: "The small colonies will have no safety in the right to happiness, if the great colonies are not limited. All the colonies defend the lands against the king of Great Britain, and at the expense of all. Does Virginia wish to establish quit-rents? Shall she sell the lands for her own emolument? I do not mean that the United States shall sell them, to get money by them; we shall grant them in small quantities, without quit-rent, or tribute, or

purchase-money." Jefferson spoke against the proposed power as too great and vague, and protested against the competency of congress to decide upon the right of Virginia; but he expressed the confident hope "that the colonies would limit themselves." Unless they would do so, Wilson claimed for Pennsylvania the right to say she would not confederate. 1776. July.

The dispute developed germs of delay; but all divisions might at that time have been reconciled, had the general scheme of confederation in itself been attractive; but its form was so complicate, and its type so low, that it could not live. At the outset, the misshapen organism struck with paralysis the zeal for creating a government. Had such a scheme been at once adopted, the war could not have been carried on; but congress soon grew weary of considering it, and the revolution during its years of crisis continued to be conducted by the more efficient existing union, constituted by the instructions under which the delegates of the several colonies were assembled, held together by the necessities of war, and able to show energy of will by its acknowledgment of the right of the majority to decide a question.

The country had, therefore, to fight the battles of independence under the simple organization by which it had been declared; but preconceived notions and the never-sleeping dread of the absorption of the states interfered with the vigorous prosecution of the war. Soldiers were not enlisted directly by the United States; and the fear of a standing army as a deadly foe to the liberties of the people had thus far limited the enlistment of citizens to short terms; so that on the approach of danger the national defence was committed to the ebb and flow of the militia of the separate states. Thus good discipline was impossible, and service insecure.

In the urgency of danger, Washington made a requisition on Connecticut for foot-soldiers; unable to despatch infantry, Trumbull sent three regiments of light-horse, composed chiefly of heads of families and freeholders, mounted on their farm-horses, armed with fowling-pieces, without

discipline, or compactness, or uniformity of dress. Their rustic manners were an object of ridicule to officers from the south, whom they in return scorned as "butterflies and coxcombs." Washington could not furnish them forage, and had no use for them as cavalry. With reluctance they consented to mount guard; but they persistently quoted the laws of Connecticut in support of their peremptory demand of exemption from fatigue duty. Less than ten days in camp wore out their patience; and at their own request they were discharged.

The pride of equality prevailed among the officers. The instructions of congress to Washington were by some interpreted to have made the decision of the council of war paramount to that of the general in command. Every one insisted on his own opinion, and was ready to question the wisdom of those above him. In July, Crown Point was abandoned by the northern army, on the concurrent advice of the general officers, against the protest of Stark and twenty field-officers. Meantime, Gates, though holding a subordinate command, purposely neglected to make reports to his superior; and when Washington saw fit to "open the correspondence," and, after consulting his council, "expressed his sorrow at the retreat from Crown Point," he resented the interference as "unprecedented," insisted that he and his council were in "nothing inferior" to "their brethren and compeers" of the council of the commander in chief, and referred the matter to congress with a declaration that he and the generals with him "would not be excelled in zeal or military virtue by any of the officers, however dignified or distinguished." While he so hastily set himself up as the rival of the commander in chief, he was intriguing with New England members of congress to supersede Schuyler.

To these petty dissensions Washington opposed his own public spirit. In the general order for the first of August, he spoke for union: "Divisions among ourselves most effectually assist our enemies; the provinces are all united to oppose the common enemy, and all distinctions are sunk in the name of an American."

1776. Aug. 1.

On the next day, the members of congress, having no army but a transient one, no confederation, no treasury, no supplies of materials of war, signed the declaration of independence, which had been engrossed on parchment. The first, after the president, to write his name was Samuel Adams, to whom the men of that day ascribed "the greatest part in the greatest revolution of the world." The body was somewhat changed from that which voted on the fourth of July. Chase was now present, and by his side Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a new member, in whose election the long disfranchised Catholics of Maryland saw an evidence of their disinthralment. Wythe and Richard Henry Lee had returned from Richmond; Dickinson and two of his colleagues had made way for Clymer, Rush, and others; Robert Morris, who had been continued as a representative of Pennsylvania, now joining heartily with John Adams and Jefferson and Franklin, put his hand to the instrument, which he henceforward maintained with all the resources of his hopeful mind. Mackean was with the army, and did not appear on the roll before 1781. For New York, Philip Livingston and Lewis Morris joined with Francis Lewis and William Floyd. 1776. Aug. 2.

American independence was ratified not by congress only, but by the instincts and intuitions of the nation. The unselfish enthusiasm of the people was its support; the boundlessness of the country formed its natural defence; and the self-asserting individuality of every state and of every citizen, though it forbade the organization of an efficient government, with executive unity, imposed on Britain the impossible task of conquering them one by one.

CHAPTER III.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE IN EUROPE.

JULY—OCTOBER, 1776.

SINCE America must wage a war for existence as a nation without a compacted union or an efficient government, there was the more need of foreign alliances. The maritime powers, which had been pursued by England with overbearing pride till they had been led to look upon her as their natural foe, did not wait to be entreated. On the seventh of July, when there was danger of a rupture between Spain and Portugal, Verrgennes read to the king in council his advice:

1776. July.

July 7.

"The Catholic king," that is the king of Spain, "must not act precipitately; for a war by land would make us lose sight of the great object of weakening the only enemy whom France can and ought to distrust. The spirit and the letter of the alliance with Austria promise her influence to hold back Russia from falling upon the king of Sweden, or listening to English overtures. In Holland it will be proper to reanimate the ashes of the too much neglected republican party, and to propitiate favor for neutrality as a source of gain. The Americans must be notified of the consequences which the actual state of things presages, if they will but await its development. As the English are armed in North America, we cannot leave our colonies destitute of all means of resistance. The isles of France and Bourbon demand the same foresight. The English, under pretence of relieving their squadron in the Indies, will double its force; and, such is their strength in the peninsula of Hindostan, they might easily drive us from Pondicherry and our colonies, if we do not prepare for defence. Time is precious; every moment must be turned to account."

The well-considered policy of the French minister was traversed by the arrival of Silas Deane. His instructions directed Deane to obtain information of what was going forward in England, through his old acquaintance, one Edward Bancroft, a native of Connecticut, who, as an adventurer in quest of fortune, had migrated back to the mother country, and had there gained some repute as a physician and a naturalist. In 1769 he had published an able and spirited pamphlet, vindicating the legislative claims of the colonies; and, under some supervision from Franklin, he had habitually written for the "Monthly Review" notices of publications relating to America. It was his avowed belief that "every part of animated nature was created for its own happiness only;" and he accepted the post of a paid American spy, to prepare himself for the more lucrative office of a double spy for the British ministers.

The French government was deliberating on the methods of encouraging trade with the united colonies. Replying to an inquiry of the comptroller-general, Vergennes, on the tenth, advised to admit their ships and cargoes without exacting duties or applying the restrictive laws on their entry or departure; so that France might become the emporium of their commerce with other European nations. "Take every precaution," so he admonished his colleague, "that our motives, our intentions, and, as far as possible, our proceedings, may be hidden from the English." 1776. July 10.

The attempt at concealment was vain. On the eleventh, Vergennes admitted Deane to an interview. Reserving for the king's consideration the question of recognising the independence and protecting the trade of the united colonies, he listened with great satisfaction to the evidences of their ability to hold out against British arms to the end of the year, and gave it as his private opinion that, in case they should reject the sovereignty of his Britannic majesty, they might count on the unanimous good wishes of the government and people of France, whose interest it would not be to see them July 11.

1776. reduced by force. Received again on the twenti-
July 20. eth, Deane made a formal request for two hundred light brass field-pieces, and arms and clothing for twenty-five thousand men. The arms were promised; Du Coudray, a distinguished engineer, who had given lessons to Count d'Artois, and who wished to serve in America, was employed to select from the public arsenals cannon of the old pattern that could be spared; and Beaumarchais, whom Vergennes authoritatively recommended, offered merchandise on credit to the value of three millions of livres. The minister did not suspect that congress had committed its affairs to a man who was wanting in discernment and integrity. But Deane called over Bancroft as if he had been a colleague, showed him his letters of credence and his instructions, took him as a companion in his journeys to Versailles, and repeated to him all that passed in
Aug. the interviews with the minister. Bancroft returned to England, and his narrative for the British ministry is a full record of the first official intercourse between France and the United States. The knowledge thus obtained enabled the British ambassador to embarrass the shipment of supplies by timely remonstrances; for the French cabinet was unwilling to appear openly as the complice of the insurgents.

The arrival of the declaration of independence gave more earnestness to the advice of Vergennes. On the last
Aug. 31. day of August he read to the king, in committee with Maurepas, Sartine, Saint-Germain, and Clugny, considerations on the part which France should now take towards England: "Ruin hangs over a state which, trusting to the good faith of its rivals, neglects precautions for safety, and disdains the opportunity of rendering its habitual foe powerless to injure. England is without question and by inheritance the enemy of France. If to-day she veils her ancient jealousy under the specious exterior of friendship, her desires and her principles are unchanged. She fears lest France should profit by the truly singular opportunity to take revenge for her frequent injustice, her outrages, and her perfidies; it would be a great mistake to

flatter ourselves that, under a sense of the beneficent moderation of the king, she will be disposed in more quiet times to a corresponding conduct. For this there is no guarantee in her intense nationality of character, to which the feeblest gleam of prosperity in France is an unsupportable grief. She regards our measures for restoring our navy as an attack on the exclusive empire which she arrogates over the seas, and her animosity is restrained by nothing but a sense of danger or a want of power. It is her constant maxim to make war upon us, as soon as she sees us ready to assume our proper place as a maritime power. Left to herself, she will fall upon our marine, taking the same advantages as in 1755. What reparation have we thus far obtained for the affronts that have been put upon us in India, and the habitual violation of our rights at Newfoundland under the clear and precise stipulations of a solemn treaty? Moreover, the English cruisers, near the mouths of our harbors in America, have committed violent acts in contempt of the flag of the king. Do the English treat Spain with more respect than France? In the bosom of peace they labor to form establishments in the centre of her possessions, and excite savage nations to rise against her. In the south of America, Portugal openly attacks Spain; England justifies her ally, whom she values more than a rich province; and nourishes the germ of this quarrel, in order to direct its development as may suit her ambition and convenience. England has in America a numerous army and fleet, equipped for prompt action; if the Americans baffle her efforts, will not the chiefs of the ministry seek compensation at the expense of France or Spain? Her conduct makes it plain, even to demonstration, that we can count little upon her sincerity and rectitude; still it is not for me to draw the conclusion, that with a power of so doubtful fidelity war is preferable to a precarious peace, which can be no more than a truce of uncertain duration. The object of these reflections is not to anticipate the resolution which can come only from the high wisdom of the supreme authority, but only to present the motives which may give it light. 1776. Aug. 31.

"The advantages of a war with England in the present conjuncture prevail so eminently over its inconveniences, that there is no room for a comparison. What better moment could France seize, to efface the shame of the odious surprise of 1755, and all the ensuing disasters, than this, when England, engaged in a civil war a thousand leagues off, has scattered the forces necessary for her internal defence? Her sailors are in America, not in ships-of-war only, but in more than four hundred transports. Now that the United States have declared their independence, there is no chance of conciliation unless supernatural events should force them to bend under the yoke, or the English to recognise their independence. While the war continues between the insurgents and the English, the American sailors and soldiers, who in the last war contributed to make those enormous conquests of which France felt so keenly the humiliation, will be employed against the English, and indirectly for France.

1776. Aug. 31.

"The war will form between France and North America a connection which will not grow up and vanish with the need of the moment. No interest can divide the two nations. Commerce will form between them a very durable, if not an eternal, chain; vivifying industry, it will bring into our harbors the commodities which America formerly poured into those of England, with a double benefit, for the augmentation of our national labor lessens that of a rival.

"Whether war against England would involve a war on the continent deserves to be discussed. The only three powers whom England could take into her pay are Austria, Prussia, and Russia. The last of these will not come to attack France and Spain with her armies; should she send ships-of-war, it would only make a noise in the newspapers; if she should attempt a diversion by a war on Sweden, France must at any rate have war with England, for England would never suffer a French fleet to prescribe laws in the Baltic. The alliance between France and Austria, and the unlimited love of the empress queen for peace, guarantee her neutrality. The mutual distrust of the courts of Vienna and Berlin will keep them both from mixing in

a war between the house of Bourbon and England. The republic of Holland, having, beyond all other powers, reason to complain of the tyranny of the English in all parts of the globe, cannot fear their humiliation, and would regard the war on the part of France as one of conservation rather than of conquest. As it is the dearest desire of the king, in conformity to his principles, to establish the glory of his reign on justice and peace, it is certain that if his majesty, seizing a unique occasion which the ages will perhaps never reproduce, should succeed in striking England a blow sufficient to lower her pride and to confine her pretensions within just limits, he will for many years be master of peace, and, without displaying his power except to make order and peace everywhere reign, he will have the precious glory of becoming the benefactor not of his people only, but of all the nations. 1776. Aug. 31.

"The fidelity and the oath of a zealous minister oblige him to explain frankly the advantages and the inconveniences of whatever policy circumstances may recommend; this is the object of the present memoir; this duty fulfilled, nothing remains but to await in respectful silence the command which may please the wisdom of the king.

"Should his majesty, on the other hand, prefer a doubtful and ill-assured peace to a war which necessity and reason can justify, the defence of our possessions will exact almost as great an expenditure as war, without any of the alleviations and resources which war authorizes. Even could we be passive spectators of the revolution in North America, can we look unmoved at that which is preparing in Hindostan, and which will be as fatal to us as that in America to England? The revolution in Hindostan, once begun, will console England for her losses, by increasing her means and her riches tenfold. This we are still able to prevent."

The words of Vergennes were sharp and penetrating; now that Turgot and Malesherbes were removed, he had no antagonist in the cabinet; his comprehensive policy embraced all parts of the globe; his analysis of Europe was exact and just; and his deference to the king removed every appearance of presumption. The young

prince whose decision was invoked was too weak to lead in affairs of magnitude; his sluggish disposition deadened every impulse by inertness; his devotion to the principle of monarchical power made him shrink from revolution; his intuitions, dim as they were, repelled all sympathy with insurgent republicans; his severe probity struggled against aggression on England; with the utmost firmness of will of which his feeble nature was capable, he was resolved that the peace of France should not be broken in his day. But, deciding firmly against war, he shunned the labor of further discussion and indolently allowed his ministers to aid the Americans, according to the precedents set by England in Corsica.

1776. Sept. Meantime, Beaumarchais, with the connivance of Vergennes, used delicate flattery to awaken in the cold breast of the temporizing Maurepas a passion for glory. The profligate Count d'Artois, younger brother of the king, and the prodigal Duke de Chartres, better known as the Duke of Orleans, innovators in manners, throwing aside the stiff etiquette and rich dress of former days for the English fashion of plain attire, daring riders and charioteers, eager patrons of the race-course, which was still a novelty in France, gave their voices for war with all the pride and levity of youth. The Count de Broglie was an early partisan of the Americans. A large part of the nobility of France panted for an opportunity to tame the haughtiness of England, which, as they said to one another, after having crowned itself with laurels, and grown rich by conquests, and mastered all the seas, and insulted every nation, now turned its insatiable pride against its own colonies. First among these was the Marquis de Lafayette, then just nineteen, master of two hundred thousand livres a year, and happy in a wife who had the spirit to approve his enthusiasm. He whispered his purpose of joining the Americans to two young friends, the Count de Ségur and the Viscount de Noailles, who wished, though in vain, to be his companions. At first the Count de Broglie opposed his project, saying: "I have seen your uncle die in the wars of Italy; I was present when your father fell at the battle of

Minden; and I will not be accessory to the ruin of the only remaining branch of the family." But when it appeared that the young man's heart was enrolled, and that he took thought of nothing but how to join the flag of his choice, the count respected his unalterable resolution. Beside disinterested and chivalrous volunteers, a crowd of selfish adventurers, officers who had been dropped from the French service under the reforms of Saint-Germain, and even Swiss and Germans, thronged Deane's apartments in quest of employment, and by large promises, sturdy importunity, or real or pretended recommendations from great men, wrung from him promiscuous engagements for high rank in the American army.

Like Louis XVI., the Catholic king was averse to hostile measures; his chief minister wished not to raise up a republic on the western continent, but only to let England worry and exhaust herself by a long civil war. American ships were received in Spanish harbors, and every remonstrance was met by the plea that they hoisted English colors, and that their real character could not be known. Even the privateers fitted out at Salem, Cape Ann, and Newburyport, hovered off the rock of Lisbon and Cape St. Vincent, or ventured into the Bay of Biscay, sure of not being harmed when they ran into Corunna or Bilbao; but Grimaldi adhered strictly to the principle of wishing no change in the relation of the British colonies to their parent country, being persuaded that nothing could be more alarming to Spain than their independence. 1776. Sept. to Oct.

The new attitude of the United States changed the aspect of the conflict in England. The former friends to the rights of Americans as fellow-subjects were not friends to their separate existence; and all parties were summoned, as Englishmen, to unanimity. The virtue of patriotism is more attractive than that of justice; and the minority opposed to the government, dwindling almost to nothing, was now to have against them king, lords, and commons, nearly the whole body of the law, the more considerable part of the landed and mercantile interests, and the political weight of the church. The archbishop of Canterbury, in his

proclamation for a fast, to be read in all the churches, charged the "rebel" congress with uttering "specious falsehoods;" in a commentary on the declaration of independence, Hutchinson referred its origin to a determined design formed in the interval between the reduction and the cession of Canada; the young Jeremy Bentham, unwarmed by hope, misled by his theories, rejected the case of the insurgents as "founded on the assumption of natural rights, claimed without the slightest evidence for their existence, and supported by vague and declamatory generalities." Yet the reflective judgment of England justifies America with almost perfect accord. The revolution began in the attempt of the British government to add to the monopoly of the commerce of the colonies their systematic taxation by parliament, so that the king might wield with one sovereign will the forces of the whole empire for the extension of its trade and its dominion. On this issue all English statesmen now approve the act of independence. Even in that day, Charles Townshend's policy of taxes in 1767 was condemned by Mansfield and Jenkinson, not less than by Camden and Burke, as "the most absurd measure that could possibly be imagined;" the power of parliament to tax colonies was already given up in the mind of parliament itself, and was soon to be renounced by a formal act.

1776. Sept. to Oct.

Blood was first shed in the attempt to enforce the alterations in the charter of Massachusetts. The few English statesmen who took the trouble to understand the nature of the change pronounced it a useless violation of a time-hallowed constitution. But the British parliament has never abdicated the general power over charters; it has, from that day to this, repeatedly exercised the function of granting, revoking, and altering the fundamental law of British colonies; and has interfered in their internal affairs to regulate the franchises of English emigrants; to extend civil privileges to semi-barbarous races; to abolish the slave-trade; and to set free the slave.

The conquest of the United States presented appalling difficulties. The task was no less than to recover by force of arms the vast region which lies between Nova Scotia and

Florida; the first campaign had ended in the expulsion of the British from New England; the second had already been marked by the repulse from South Carolina, and by delays. The old system of tactics was out of place; nor could the capacity of the Americans for resistance be determined by any known rule of war; the depth of their passions had not been fathomed: they will long shun an open battle-ground; every thicket will be an ambuscade of partisans; every stone wall, a hiding-place for sharpshooters; every swamp, a fortress; the boundless woods, an impracti- 1776. Sept. to Oct.
cable barrier; the farmer's house, a garrison. Wherever the armies go, food and forage and sheep and cattle will disappear before them; a country over which the invaders may march in victory will rise up in their rear with life and elasticity. Nothing is harder than to beat down a people who are resolved never to yield; and the English, in abridging the liberties of their own colonies, were at war with themselves.

"Can Britain fail?" asked the poet-laureate of England, in his birthday ode. "Every man," said the wise political economist, Tucker, "is thoroughly convinced that the colonies will and must become independent some time or other; I entirely agree with Franklin and Adams, to make the separation there is no time like the present." David Hume from his death-bed advised his country to give up the war with America, in which defeat would destroy its credit, and success its liberties. "A tough business, indeed," said Gibbon; "they have passed the Rubicon, and rendered a treaty infinitely more difficult; the thinking friends of government are by no means sanguine." Lord North had declared his intention to resign if his conciliatory proposition should fail. Lord George Germain, who had been assured by refugees that if the king's troops, in the course of the campaign, would alarm the rebels in their rear from Canada and the Ohio, they would submit by winter to the attack from the side of the sea, was embittered against the admiralty for having delayed the embarkations of troops, and against Carleton for his lenity and slowness. "The more money you spend as a naval power the better," said the British

secretary at war to Garnier; "it will all be thrown away." "How so?" retorted Garnier; "is not France bounded on both seas, from Dunkirk to Antibes?" But, if Barrington did not fear France upon the ocean, the colonial policy of England involved him in difficulties affecting his conscience and his character. "I have my own opinions in respect to the disputes in America," said he imploringly to the king; "I am summoned to meetings, where I sometimes think it my duty to declare them openly before twenty or thirty persons; and the next day I am forced either to vote contrary to them, or to vote with an opposition which I abhor." Yet when the king chose that he should remain secretary at war and member of the house of commons, he added: "I shall continue to serve your majesty in both capacities." The prospect of the interference of France excited in George III. such restless anxiety that he had an interview with every Englishman of distinction who returned from Paris or Versailles; and he was impatient to hear from America that General Howe had struck decisive blows.

1776. Sept. to Oct.

CHAPTER IV.

BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND.

AUGUST, 1776.

IT was the fixed purpose of Washington "to obey implicitly the orders of congress with a scrupulous exactness;" and he rejected "every idea of interfering with the authority of the state of New York." In obedience to their united wishes, he attempted the defence of New York Island. The works for its protection, including the fortifications in Brooklyn, were planned by Lee in concert with a New York committee and a committee from congress. Jay thought it proper to lay Long Island waste, burn New York, and retire to the impregnable Highlands; but, as it was the maxim of congress not to give up a foot of territory that could possibly be held, Washington promised "his utmost exertions under every disadvantage;" "the appeal," he said, "may not terminate so happily as I could wish, yet any advantage the enemy may gain I trust will cost them dear." To protect New York city, he was compelled to hold King's Bridge, Governor's Island, Paulus Hook, and the heights of Brooklyn. For all these posts, divided by water, and some of them fifteen miles apart, he had in the first week of August but ten thousand five hundred and fourteen men fit for duty. Of these, many were often obliged to sleep without cover, exposed to the dews. There was a want of good physicians, medicines, and hospitals; more than three thousand lay sick; their number was increasing; they were to be seen seeking shelter in every barn or stable or shed, and sometimes nestling in thickets and beside fences. 1776. Aug.

Of the effective men, less than six thousand had had any

experience; and none had seen more than one year's service. Some were wholly without arms; not one regiment of infantry was properly equipped. The regiment of artillery, five hundred and eighty-eight in number, including officers, had no skilled gunners or engineers. Knox, its colonel, had been a Boston bookseller. Most of the cannon in the field-works were of iron, old and honeycombed, broken and defective. The constant arrival and departure of militia made good discipline impossible. The government of New Jersey called out one half of its militia, to be relieved at the end of one month by the other half; but the call was little heeded. "We shall never do well until we get a regular army; and this will never be until men are enlisted for a longer duration; and that will never be until we are more generous in our encouragement. Time alone will persuade us to this measure; and in the mean while we shall very indiscreetly waste a much greater expense than would be necessary for this purpose, in temporary calls upon the militia, besides risking the loss of many lives and much reputation." So wrote John Adams, the head of the board of war, a man of executive ability, but sometimes misled by his own energy. He rejected the thought of retiring from Long Island, demanded of others zeal and hardihood like his own, inclined to judge an army capable of victory when orders for the supply of men had gone forth, and never duly estimated the resisting force of indifference and inexpertness. While he cultivated confidential relations with Lee and Gates, he never extended the same cordial frankness to Washington, never comprehended his superior capacity for war, and never weighed his difficulties with generous considerateness. Moreover, congress was always ready to assume the conduct of the campaign, and to issue impracticable resolutions. To Gates it intrusted a limited power of filling up vacancies as they occurred in his army; but it refused to grant the same authority to the commander in chief, saying: "Future generals may make a bad use of it." The natural modesty of Washington, and his sense of his imperfectness in the science and practice of war, led him to listen with thoughtfulness to the sugges-

1776. Aug.

tions of others; while his comprehensive vigilance, unwearied close attention, and consummate reflective powers were fast bringing out the qualities of a great commander. Among the major-generals around him, there was not one on whom he could fully rely. As yet the military judgment of Greene was crude. The brigadiers were untrained, and some of them without aptitude for service. Poor as had been his council at Cambridge, that in New York was worse. The general officers, whose advice his instructions bound him to ask, knew not enough of war to estimate danger rightly; and the timid and the time-serving, who had their eyes on congress, put on the cheap mask of courage by spirited votes.

On the fifth of August, at the darkest moment, Trumbull wrote from Connecticut: "Notwithstanding our enemies are numerous, yet knowing our cause righteous, and trusting Heaven will support us, I do not greatly dread what they can do against us." On the seventh, Washington answered: "To trust altogether in the justice of our cause, without our own utmost exertions, would be tempting Providence;" and he laid bare the weakness of his army. On receiving this letter, Trumbull convened his council of safety. Five regiments from the counties of Connecticut nearest New York had already been sent forward; he called out nine regiments more, and exhorted those not enrolled in any train-band to volunteer: "Be roused and alarmed to stand forth in our just and glorious cause. Join yourselves to some one or other of the companies of the militia now ordered to New York, or form yourselves into distinct companies, and choose captains forthwith. March on: this shall be your warrant. Play the man for God and for the cities of our God: may the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, be your leader." At these words, the farmers, though their harvest was but half gathered, their meadows half cut, their chance of return in season to sow their grain before winter uncertain, rose instantly in arms, forming nine regiments each of three hundred and fifty men, and, self-equipped, marched to New York, just in time to meet the advance of the British. 1776. Aug.

True, their arms were ill-suited for the day of battle, their habits of life too stiff for military discipline, their term of service too short for becoming soldiers, so that they were rather a rally of the people than a division of an army; but they brought to their country's defence the best will and all that they could offer, and their spirit evinced the existence of a nation.

In like manner, in New York, where two thirds of the men of wealth kept aloof from the struggle, or sided with the enemy, the country people turned out of their harvest-fields with surprising alacrity, leaving their grain to perish for want of the sickle. The body thus suddenly levied in New York, the nine regiments from Connecticut, the Maryland regiment and companies, a regiment from Delaware, and two more battalions of Pennsylvania riflemen, raised the number of men fit for duty under Washington's command to about seventeen thousand; but most of them were fresh from rustic labor, ill-armed or not armed at all, and, from ignorance of life in camp, prone to disease.

In spirited orders that were issued from day to day, the general mixed counsel with animating words. He bade them "remember that liberty, property, life, and honor were all at stake;" that they were fighting for every thing that can be dear to free men; that Heaven would crown with success so just a cause. To the brave he promised rewards; the coward who should skulk in time of battle, or retreat without orders, he threatened with instant death; and he summoned all to resolve to conquer or die.

1776. Aug.

To baffle the ministerial plan of separating New England from the middle states by the junction of the army of Canada with Howe, the command of the Hudson must be maintained. The New York convention dwelt anxiously on this idea; the survey of the river, at a point about two miles and a half below King's Bridge, was made by Putnam and Mifflin; and Putnam undertook to obstruct the channel by a scheme of his own. In connection with this object, he was an advocate for building a fort on the height now known as Fort Washington; and he thought the position,

if properly fortified, was in itself almost impregnable, without any regard to the heights above the bridge.

Of the batteries by which New York was protected, the most important was the old Fort George on the south point of the island; a barrier crossed Broadway near the Bowling Green; a redoubt was planted near the river, west of Trinity church; another, that took the name of Bunker Hill, near the site of the present Centre Market. Earthworks were thrown up here and there along the East and Hudson Rivers within the settled parts of the town, and at the northern end of the island, on hills overlooking King's Bridge; but many intermediate points, favorable for landing, were defenceless. Two regiments, one of which was Prescott's, were all that could be spared to garrison Governor's Island. 1776. Aug.

The American lines in Brooklyn, including angles, and four redoubts which mounted twenty large and small cannon, ran for a mile and a half from Wallabout Bay to the marsh of Gowanus Cove; they were defended by ditches and felled trees; the counterscarp and parapet were fraised with sharpened stakes. A fortress of seven guns crowned Brooklyn Heights. The entrance into the East River was guarded by a battery of five guns at Red Hook. Six incomplete continental regiments, with two of Long Island militia, constituted all the force with which Greene occupied this great extent of works.

The expected British re-enforcements had arrived; the troops with Clinton and Cornwallis on the first, and eleven days later more than twenty-five hundred British troops from England, and more than eighty-six hundred Hessians. Sir Peter Parker had also come, bringing Campbell and Dunmore, who with Tryon and Martin hoped from victory their restoration to their governments. On the fifteenth, the Hessians, who were in excellent health after their long voyage, landed on Staten Island, eager for war. Before a conflict of arms, Lord Howe once more proposed the often rejected plan of Lord North. To his messenger, Lord Drummond, who had been allowed to leave the country on conditions that he had broken, Washington made no

answer but by a rebuke for his want of "that attention to his parole which belongs to the character of a man of strict honor;" and, lest the sight of the flag of truce should lull the army into a fatal security, on the twentieth he announced "that no offer of peace had been made, that the army might expect an attack as soon as the wind and tide should prove favorable, and that every man should prepare his mind and his arms for action." To congress he on the same day wrote frankly, that it would not be possible to prevent the landing of the British on Long Island; "however," he said, "we shall attempt to harass them as much as possible, which will be all that we can do." Just at this time Greene became ill of a raging fever, and owed his life to rest, change of air, and the unwearied attention of Morgan, his physician. The loss of his service was irreparable; for the works in Brooklyn had been built under his eye, and he was familiar with the environs. His place was, on the twentieth, assigned to Sullivan.

1776. Aug.

Very heavy rains delayed the movements of the British. About nine on the morning of the twenty-second, the men-of-war moved near the shore in Gravesend Bay, to protect the landing of more than fifteen thousand men, chiefly British troops, from Staten Island. The English and the Highlanders, with the artillery, consisting of forty cannon, were the first to disembark; last came Donop's brigade of grenadiers and yagers, in large flat-boats, standing with their muskets in hand, in line and order of battle. As it was reported to Washington that the British intended by a forced march to surprise the lines at Brooklyn, he reenforced them with six regiments; before sending more, he waited to be certain that the enemy were not making a feint upon Long Island, with the real design to fall directly upon New York. The troops went off in high spirits, and all the army was cheerful; but the inhabitants were struck with terror, and could hardly be persuaded that their houses would not be burnt in case of the retreat of the American army; women and children spread dismay by their shrieks and wailing, and families deserted the city, which they were not to revisit for seven years.

The main body of the British army spread itself out upon the plain which stretches from Gravesend Bay towards the east; the country people could offer no resistance; the British camp was thronged by farmers of the neighborhood, wearing badges of loyalty and seeking protection; while the patriots took to flight, driving cattle before them, and burning all kinds of forage. Cornwallis with the reserve, two battalions of infantry and the corps of Germans, advanced to Flatbush; Hand's Pennsylvania riflemen retired before him, burning stacks of wheat and hay on their march; his artillery drove the Americans from their slight barrier within the village to the wooded heights beyond, where in the afternoon they were strengthened by fresh arrivals from the lines.

In the following days, during which Washington divided his time between the two islands, the advanced parties of the two armies had encounters with each other; in these, the American riflemen, poor as were their arms, proved their superiority as skirmishers; on the twenty-fourth, Donop was aimed at and narrowly escaped death.

On that day, Putnam, in right of his rank as second to Washington, took the command on Long Island, but with explicit instructions to guard the passes through the woods; while the New York congress sent independent orders to Woodhull, a provincial brigadier, to drive off the horses, horned cattle, and sheep, and destroy the forage, which would otherwise have fallen into the possession of the enemy.

On the twenty-fifth, two more brigades of Hessians with Von Heister came over to Flatbush, increasing the force of Howe on Long Island to "upwards of twenty thousand" rank and file. It was the most perfect army of that day in the world, for experience, discipline, equipments, and artillery; and was supported by more than four hundred ships and transports in the bay; by ten ships of the line and twenty frigates, besides bomb-ketches, galiots, and other small vessels. Among them were the "Phœnix" and the "Rose," which, after repelling an attack from six American galleys in Tappan Bay, and narrowly escaping destruction

1776. Aug. 25.

by fire-ships, had taken advantage of a strong wind and tide to descend the river and rejoin the fleet. Against this vast armament, the Americans on the island, after repeated reenforcements, were no more than eight thousand men, most of whom were volunteers or militia; and they had not the aid of a single platoon of cavalry, nor of one ship-of-war. The unequal armies were kept apart by the ridge which runs through Long Island to the south-west, and, at the distance of two miles from the American lines, throws out to the north and south a series of hills, as so many buttresses against the bay. Over these very densely wooded heights, which were steep and broken, three obvious routes led from the British encampments to Brooklyn: the one which followed a lane through a gorge south of the present Greenwood cemetery, to a coast-road from the bay to Brooklyn ferry, was guarded by Pennsylvanian musketeers and riflemen under Atlee and Kichline; across the direct road to Brooklyn the regiments of Henshaw of Massachusetts and Johnston of New Jersey lay encamped, at the summit of the ridge on Prospect Hill overlooking Flatbush; while a third, the "clove" road, which diverged from the second, and a little further to the east descended into the village of Bedford, was guarded chiefly by Connecticut levies and infantry from Pennsylvania. Besides these, three miles to the east of Bedford, on a road from the hamlet of Jamaica to Brooklyn, there was a pass which seemed even more easy of defence than the others. The whole number of the Americans stationed on the coast-road and along the ridge as far as their posts extended was about twenty-five hundred; and they were expected by Washington "to harass and annoy the British in their march."

1776. Aug. 26. On the twenty-sixth, Washington remained on Long Island till the evening. Putnam and Sullivan visited the party that kept guard furthest to the left, and the movements of the enemy plainly disclosed that it was their intention to get into the rear of the Americans by the Jamaica road; yet "Washington's order to secure the Jamaica road was not obeyed."

The plan of attack by General Howe was as elaborate as

if he had had to encounter an equal army. A squadron of five ships under Sir Peter Parker was to menace New York, and act with effect against the right flank of the American defences; Grant with two brigades, a regiment of Highlanders, and two companies of New York provincials, was to advance upon the coast-road toward Gowanus; the three German brigades and yagers, stationed half a mile in front of Flatbush, in a line of nearly a mile in length, were to force the direct road to Brooklyn; while, at the evening gun, Howe, and much the larger part of the army, under Clinton, Cornwallis, and Percy, with eighteen field-pieces, leaving their tents and equipage behind, moved from Flatlands across the country through the New Lots, to turn the left of the American outposts.

The American camp which was furthest to the left in the woods was alarmed three times during the night; but each time the alarm died away.

At three in the morning of the twenty-seventh, 1776. Aug. 27. Putnam was told that the picket which guarded the approach to the coast-road had been driven in; and without further inquiry he ordered Stirling, then a brigadier, with two regiments nearest at hand, "to advance beyond the lines and repulse the enemy." The two regiments that were chosen for this desperate service were the large and well-equipped one of Delaware and that of Maryland, composed of the young sons of freeholders and men of property from Baltimore and its neighborhood, though the colonels and lieutenant-colonels of both chanced to be absent on duty in New York city. They were followed by Huntington's regiment of two hundred and fifty men from Connecticut, under the lead of Parsons, a lawyer of that state, who eighteen days before had been raised from the bar to the rank of brigadier. Putnam's rash order directed Stirling to stop the approach of a detachment which might have been "ten times his number," and left him no discretion. The position to which he was sent was dangerous in the extreme. His course was oblique, inclining to the right; and this movement, relinquishing his direct communication with the camp, placed in his rear a marsh extending on both sides of

Gowanus Creek, which was scarcely fordable even at low tide, and was crossed by a bridge and a causeway that served as a dam for one of two tide-mills; on his left he had no connecting support; in front he had to encounter Grant's division, which outnumbered him four to one; and on his right was the bay, commanded by the fleet of Lord Howe. About where now runs Nineteenth Street in Brooklyn, he formed his line along a ridge from the left of the road to woods on a height now enclosed within the cemetery and known as Battle Hill. Two field-pieces, all that he had to oppose against ten, were placed on the side of the hill so as to command the road and the only approach for some hundred yards. He himself occupied the right, which was the point of greatest danger; Atlee and Kichline formed his centre; Parsons commanded the left.

1776. Aug. 27.

Early in the morning, Putnam was informed that infantry and cavalry were advancing on the Jamaica road. He gave Washington no notice of the danger; he sent Stirling no order to retreat; but Sullivan went out with a small party, and took command of the regiments of Henshaw and Johnston.

The sun rose with an angry red glare, foreboding a change of weather; the first object seen from New York was the squadron of Sir Peter Parker attempting to sail up the bay as if to attack the town; but, the wind veering to the northward, it came to anchor at the change of tide, and the "Roebuck" was the only ship that fetched high enough to exchange shot with the battery at Red Hook. Relieved from apprehension of an attack on the city, Washington repaired to Long Island; but he rode through the lines only in time to witness the disasters which were become inevitable.

The van of the British army under Clinton, guided by tory farmers of the neighborhood, having captured a patrol of American officers in the night and learned that the Jamaica pass was not occupied, gained the heights on the first appearance of day. The whole force with Howe, after passing them without obstruction, and halting to give the

soldiers time for refreshment, renewed its march. At half-past eight, or a little later, it reached Bedford, in the rear of the American left, and the signal was given for a general attack. At this moment, the whole force of the Americans on Long Island was but about eight thousand, less rather than more; of these only about four thou- 1776. Aug. 27. sand, including all who came out with Stirling and Sullivan, were on the wooded passes in advance of the Brooklyn lines. They were environed by the largest British army which appeared in the field during the war. Could the American parties have acted together, the disproportion would yet have been more than five to one; but as they were disconnected, and were attacked one by one, and were routed in a succession of skirmishes, the disproportion was too great to be calculated. The regiments on the extreme left did not perceive their danger till the British had turned their flank; they were the first to fly, and they reached the lines, though not without grievous losses. The regiment of Ward of Connecticut, which made its way seasonably by the mill-pond, burned the bridge as it passed, unmindful of those who were to follow.

When the cannonading from the main army and the brigades under Grant was heard, the Hessians, with flying colors and music of drums and hautboys, moved up the ridge, the yagers under Donop and some volunteers going in advance as flanking parties, and clearing the way with their small cannon; the battalions followed, not in column after the European tactics, but, on account of the hills and valleys, with a widely extended front, and in ranks but two deep, using only the bayonet. At first, Sullivan's party fired with nervous rapidity, and too high, doing little injury; then, on becoming aware of the danger on their flank and rear, they turned to retreat. The Hessians took possession of their deserted redoubt, its three brass six-pounders, one howitzer, and two baggage-wagons, and chased the fugitives relentlessly through the thickets. The Americans, stopped on their way by British regiments, were thrown back upon the Hessians. For a long time the forest rung with the cries of the pursuers and

the pursued, the crash of arms, the noise of musketry and artillery, the notes of command given by trumpets and hautboys; the ground was strewn with the wounded and the dead. Here and there a Hessian found amusement in pinning with his bayonet a rifleman to a tree; the British soldiers were equally merciless. The Jersey militia fought well, till Johnston, their colonel, was shot in the breast, after showing the most determined courage. Sullivan, seeing himself surrounded, desired his men to shift for themselves. Some of them, fighting with desperate valor, cleaved a passage through the British to the American lines; others, breaking into small parties, hid themselves in the woods, from which they escaped to the lines, or were picked up as prisoners. Sullivan concealed himself in a field of maize, where he was found by three of Knyphausen's grenadiers.

1776. Aug. 27.

The contest was over at the east and at the centre. Near the bay, Stirling still maintained his position, inspiring his men with hatred of the thought of retiring before Grant, who in the house of commons had insulted the Americans as cowards. Lord Howe, having learned that Grant's division, which halted at the edge of the woods, was in want of ammunition, went himself with a supply from his ship, sending his boat's crew with it on their backs up the hill, while further supplies followed from the store-ships. Early in the day, Parry, lieutenant-colonel under Atlee, was shot in the head as he was encouraging his men. Parsons, thinking it time to retreat, left his men in quest of orders; he was intercepted, concealed himself in a swamp, and came into camp the next morning by way of the East River. His party, abandoned to themselves, were nearly all taken prisoners; among them Jewett of Lyme, captain of volunteers, after his surrender was run through the body by the officer to whom he gave up his sword. None remained in the field but Stirling, with the regiment of Maryland and that of Delaware. For nearly four hours they had stood in their ranks with colors flying; when, finding himself without hope of a re-enforcement, and perceiving the main body of the British army rapidly coming behind

him, he gave them the word to retreat. They withdrew in perfect order; twenty marines, who mistook the Delawares, from the facing of their uniforms, for Hessians, were brought off as prisoners. The only avenue of escape was by wading through Gowanus Creek; and this passage was almost cut off by troops under Cornwallis, who had advanced by the Port road, and, with the second regiment of grenadiers and the seventy-first of Highlanders, blocked the retreat at a house near the tide-mills, within less than a half-mile of the American lines. Stirling had not a moment to deliberate; he must hold Cornwallis in check, or his whole party is lost; with the quick inspiration of disinterested valor, he ordered the Delaware regiment and one half of that of Maryland to make the best of their way across the marsh and creek; while, to secure them time for this movement, he confronted the advancing British with only five companies of Marylanders. His heroic self-sacrifice animated the young soldiers whom he retained with almost invincible resolution; they flew at the enemy with "unparalleled bravery, in view of all the American generals and troops within the lines, who alternately praised and pitied them." Washington wrung his hands as he exclaimed: "My God! what brave men must I this day lose!" They seemed likely to drive back the foremost ranks of the British; and, when forced to give way, rallied and renewed the onset. In this manner ten minutes were gained, so that the Delawares with their prisoners, and all of the Maryland regiment but its five devoted companies, succeeded in reaching the creek. Seven were drowned in its deep waters; the rest passed safely over, and were escorted to the camp by a regiment and a company, which Washington had sent out to their relief. Stirling and the few who were with him attempted to pass between Cornwallis and an American fort, but were beaten back by masses of troops. Pressed by the enemy in the front and the rear, attacked on the right flank and on the left, they gave up the contest. Most of them, retreating to the right through the woods, were cut to pieces or taken; nine only succeeded in crossing the creek. Stirling himself, refusing to surren-

1776. Aug. 27.

der to the British general, sought Von Heister, and gave up his sword to the veteran.

During the engagement, a deep column of the British descended from the woods with General Vaughan, and drew near the American lines; they were met by the fire of cannon and small arms. Howe would not risk an assault, and ordered them back to a hollow way, where they were out of the reach of musketry. The works were carefully planned, protected by an abattis, manned by fresh troops, who were strengthened by three regiments of Scott's brigade, just arrived from New York. Washington was present to direct and to encourage. The attempt to storm the redoubt, without artillery or fascines or axes or scaling-ladders, might have been repulsed with losses greater than at Bunker Hill; had the works been carried, all the American troops on Long Island must have surrendered.

1776. Aug. 27.

Of the British, at the least five officers and fifty-six others were killed, twelve officers and two hundred and forty-five others wounded, one officer and twenty marines taken prisoners. Much more than one half of this loss fell upon the troops who successively encountered Stirling. Of the Hessians, only two privates were killed; three officers and twenty-three privates were wounded. The total loss of the Americans, including officers, was, after careful inquiry, found to be less than a thousand, of whom three fourths were prisoners; this is the account always given by Washington, alike in his official report and in his most private letters; its accuracy is confirmed by the special returns from those regiments which were the chief sufferers. More than half of this loss fell upon Stirling's command; more than a fourth on the Maryland regiment alone.

From the coast-road on the bay to the pass on the road from Jamaica was a distance of more than five miles, too great to be occupied except by pickets. The approach of the British to the American lines could not have been prevented; and nothing but inexperience or blind zeal could have expected a different result. But the extent of the disasters of the day was due to the incapacity of Putnam, who, in spite of warning, suffered himself to be surprised;

and, having sent Stirling and "the flower of the American army" into the most dangerous position into which brave men could have been thrown, neglected to countermand his orders.

The day, though so full of sorrow for the Americans, shed little glory on British arms. The Hessians, who received the surrender of Sullivan, Stirling, and more than half the captives, made no boast of having routed disconnected groups of ill-armed militia, who were supported only by a few poor cannon, and were destitute of engineers. 1776. Aug. 27.

CHAPTER V.

THE RETREAT FROM LONG ISLAND.

AUGUST 27–30, 1776.

A BLEAK north-easterly wind sprung up at the close of the day. The British army, whose tents had not yet been brought up, slept in front of the lines at Brooklyn, wrapped in their blankets and warmed by fires. Those of the patriot army who in their retreat from the woody heights had left their blankets behind them, and the battalions of Scott's brigade, which had come over in haste, passed the night without shelter, suffering from the cold. The dead of the Americans lay unburied in the forest; the severely wounded languished where they fell, to suffer uncared for, and to die alone; here and there a fugitive who had concealed himself in a thicket or a swamp found his way back to his old companions. The captives were forced to endure coarse revilings and cowardly insults; and, when consigned to the provost-marshal, were huddled together in crowded rooms or prison-ships, cut off from good air and wholesome food, to know the bitterness of bondage, and waste away and die. In the American camp, distrust and dejection succeeded the rash presumption of inexperience. The privates began to hold most of their general officers in light esteem; and Washington alone could inspire confidence. He was everywhere in person; and only when it became certain that the British would remain quiet during the night, did he retire for short rest.

1776. Aug. 27.

Aug. 28. The next morning, which was Wednesday, was chill, and the sky lowered with clouds. Unable to rely on either of his major-generals, Washington again, at the break of day, renewed the inspection of the American

works, which from their great extent left many points exposed. He watched closely the British encampments, which appeared large enough for twenty thousand men; wherever he passed, he encouraged his soldiers to engage in continual skirmishes. During the morning, Mifflin brought over from New York a re-enforcement of nearly one thousand men, composed of Glover's regiment of Massachusetts fishermen, and the Pennsylvania regiments of Shee and Magaw, which were "the best disciplined of any in the army." Their arrival was greeted with cheers. They raised the number of the Americans to nine thousand. In the afternoon, rain fell heavily; the lines were at some places so low that men employed in the trenches stood up to their waists in water; provisions could not be regularly served, and whole regiments had nothing to eat but raw pork and bread; but they bore up against all hardships, for their commander in chief was always among them, exposing himself more than any one to the fury of the storm, restoring order and obedience by his incessant care, and teaching patience by his example. When the soldiers were ready to sink, the sight of their general calmly and persistently enduring the same hardships with themselves reconciled them to their sufferings. 1776. Aug. 28.

But the physical pains of Washington were his least; he alone, as he well knew, must be vigilant for his generals and his army; for eight-and-forty hours he gave no one moment to sleep, and for nearly every moment of that time, by night and by day, was on horseback in the lines.

The British commander in chief, General William Howe, by illegitimate descent an uncle to the king, was of a very different character. Six feet tall, of an uncommonly dark complexion, a coarse frame, and a sluggish mould, he was unresistingly ruled by his sensual nature. He was not much in earnest against the Americans, partly because he was persuaded that they could not be reduced by arms, partly because he professed to be a liberal in politics, partly because he never kindled with zeal for any thing. He had had military experience, and had read books on war; but, being destitute of swiftness of thought and will, he was

formed to carry on war by rule. He would not march till he could move deliberately, with ample means of transportation. On the field of battle he sometimes showed talent as an executive officer; but, except in moments of high excitement, he was lethargic, wanting alertness and sagacity. He hated business; and his impatience at being forced to attend to it, joined to a family gloom, made him difficult of access, and gained him the reputation of being haughty and morose. His indolence was his bane: not wilfully merciless, he permitted his prisoners to suffer from atrocious cruelty; not meaning that his troops should be robbed, he left peculators uncontrolled, and the army and the hospitals were wronged by contractors. His notions of honor in money matters were not nice; but he was not so much rapacious as insatiable. Disliking to have his personal comforts infringed, he indulged freely in the pleasures of the table; without any delicacy of passion, kept a mistress; and loved to shake off dull indifference by the hazards of the faro-table. His officers were expected to be, in the field, insensible to danger like himself; in their quarters, he was willing they should openly lead a profligate life; and his example led many of the young to their ruin by gaming. He had nothing heroic about him, wanting altogether the quick eye, the instant combination, and the commanding energy of a great warrior.

During the day, a party of provincial loyalists, under the command of Delancey, overtook Woodhull two miles beyond Jamaica; after he had surrendered, his captors struck him on the head with a cutlass, and slashed his arm, inflicting wounds which before many days proved fatal. He and several of the militia who were taken with him are included in Howe's list of the captives of the previous day.

All the following night Washington kept an unceasing watch over the intentions of the British army and the condition of his own. In Philadelphia, rumor quadrupled his force; the continental congress expected him to stay the English at the threshold, as had been done at Charles-
1776. Aug. 29. ton; but the morning of Thursday showed him that the British had broken ground within six hundred

yards of the height now known as Fort Greene. He saw that they intended to force his lines by regular approaches, which the nature of the ground and his want of heavy cannon extremely favored; he saw that all Long Island was in their hands, except only the neck on which he was intrenched, and that a part of his camp would soon be exposed to their guns; his men were cast down by misfortune, and falling sick from hard service, exposure, and bad food; his force was divided by a channel, more than half a mile broad, and swept by swift tides; on a change of wind, he might be encircled by the entrance of the British fleet into the East River; or ships which had sailed round Long Island into Flushing Bay might suddenly convey a part of the British army to Harlem, or to Fordham Heights, in his rear.

It was his first care to provide means of transportation for the retreat which it was no longer safe to delay. Through Mifflin, in whom he confided more than in any general on the island, and who agreed with him in opinion, he despatched, at an early hour, a written command to Heath, at King's Bridge, "to order every flat-bottomed boat and other craft at his post, fit for transporting troops, down to New York as soon as possible, without the least delay." In like manner, before noon, he sent Trumbull, the commissary-general, to New York, with orders for Hugh Hughes, the assistant quartermaster-general, "to impress every kind of water-craft, on either side of New York, that could be kept afloat, and had either oars or sails, or could be furnished with them, and to have them all in the East River by dark." 1776. Aug. 29.

These orders were issued in such profound secrecy that not even his aids knew his purpose. All day long he continued abroad in the wind and rain, visiting the stations of his men as before, and restraining their impatience. Not till "late in the day" did he alight from his horse to meet his council of war at the house of Philip Livingston on Brooklyn Heights. The abrupt proposal to retreat startled Morin Scott, and against his better judgment he objected to "giving the enemy a single inch of ground." But unanswerable

reasons were urged in favor of Washington's design: the Americans were invested by an army of more than double their number from water to water; Macdougall, whose nautical experience gave weight to his words, declared "that they were liable every moment, on the change of wind, to have the communication between them and the city cut off by the British frigates;" their supply of almost every necessary of life was scant; the rain which had fallen for two days and nights with little intermission had injured their arms and spoiled a great part of their ammunition; the soldiery, of whom many were without cover at night, were worn out by incessant duties and watching. The resolution to retreat was therefore unanimous; yet, in the ignorance of what orders Washington had issued and how well they had been obeyed, an opinion was entertained in the council that success was not to be hoped for.

1776. Aug. 29.

After dark, the regiments were ordered to prepare for attacking the enemy in the night; several of the soldiers published to their comrades their unwritten wills; but the intention to withdraw from the island was soon surmised. At eight o'clock Macdougall was at Brooklyn ferry, charged to superintend the embarkation; and Glover of Massachusetts, with his regiment of Essex county fishermen, the best mariners in the world, manned the sailing-vessels and flat-boats. The rawest troops were the first to be embarked; Mifflin, with the Pennsylvania regiments of Hand, Magaw, and Shee, the Delawares, and the remnant of the Marylanders, claimed the honor of being the last to leave the lines. About nine, the ebb of the tide was accompanied with a heavy rain and the continued adverse wind, so that for three hours the sail-boats could do little, and, with the few row-boats at hand, it seemed impossible to transport all the army; but, at eleven, the north-east wind, which had raged for three days, died away; the water became so smooth that the row-boats could be laden nearly to the gunwales; and a breeze sprung up from the south and south-west, swelling the canvas from the right quarter. It was the night of the full moon; the British were so nigh that they were heard with their pick-axes and shovels; yet neither Agnew, their general officer

for the night, nor any one of them, took notice of the deep murmur in the camp, or the plash of oars on the river, or the ripple under the sail-boats. All night long, Washington was riding through the camp, insuring the regularity of every movement. Some time before dawn on Friday morning, Mifflin, through a mistake of orders, began to march the covering party to the ferry; it was Washington who discovered them, in time to check their premature withdrawing. The order to resume their posts was a trying test of young soldiers; the regiments wheeled about with precision, and recovered their former station before the enemy perceived that it had been relinquished. As day approached, the sea-fog came rolling in thickly from the ocean; welcomed as a heavenly messenger, it shrouded the British camp, completely hid all Brooklyn, and hung over the East River without enveloping New York. When, after three hours or more of further waiting, and after every other regiment was safely cared for, the covering party came down to the water-side, Washington remained standing on the ferry-stair, and would not be persuaded to enter a boat till they were embarked. It was seven o'clock before all the companies reached the New York shore. At four, Montresor had given the alarm that the Americans were in full retreat; but the English officers were sluggards, and some hours elapsed before he and a corporal, with six men, clambered through the fallen trees, and entered the works, only to find them evacuated. From Brooklyn Heights four boats were still to be seen through the lifting fog on the East River; three of them, filled with troops, were half-way over, and escaped; the fourth, manned by three vagabonds who had loitered behind to plunder, was taken; otherwise the whole nine thousand who were on Long Island, with their provisions, military stores, field-artillery, and ordnance, except a few worthless iron cannon, landed safely in New York.

1776. Aug. 30.

"Considering the difficulties," wrote Greene, "the retreat from Long Island was the best effected retreat I ever read or heard of."

NOTE.

My account of the retreat from Long Island differs so materially from that given by the biographer of Joseph Reed, that I will not demand it to be received as accurate without explaining the authority on which it rests. This is the more necessary, as the ability and reputation of that author, William B. Reed, have misled others to adopt his narrative. The biographer represents Washington in council "on the night of the 26th" (Reed's Reed, i. 221); that "sources of deep anxiety were open, and yet Washington acted as if in command of veteran troops" (Ibid. 222); that on the 28th "he still adhered to his intention to risk a battle at his intrenchments" (Ibid. 224); that "the heavy rain of the 28th was succeeded on the 29th by a fog on the island" (Ibid. 225); that "Colonel Reed, with Mifflin and Grayson, rode to the western extremity of the lines;" that, "whilst there, the fog was lifted by a shift of wind, and the British fleet within the Narrows could be plainly seen;" that "some movement was in contemplation, and if the wind held, and the fog cleared off, the fleet would come up and surround the American army" (Ibid. 225); that "it was determined that the three officers should at once return to General Washington's quarters, and urge the immediate withdrawal of the army;" that "they" [namely, Colonel Reed nd Mifflin and Grayson] "had reason to believe that this counsel would not be acceptable, and that the commander in chief desired to try the fortune of war once more in his present position;" that "Colonel Reed, as the most intimate, and the most entitled to respect, was fixed on as the one to suggest the movement;" and that Colonel Reed's advice, thus forced upon the general, prevailed, and occasioned the call of a council of war (Ibid. 226).

That this story would lead to the inference that Washington was a most incompetent general, and a very weak man, and utterly unfit for his place, must not bias the mind of the historical inquirer. It is the office of the historian to find out the truth and to tell it, even though it should convict Washington of imbecility, while placing Colonel Reed among the saviors of the country.

The main authority of the biographer for his statement is a paper purporting to be a letter from an old man of eighty-four, just three days before his death, when he was too ill to write a letter, or to sign his name, or even to make his mark, and professing to detail the substance of conversations held by the moribund fifty-six years before, with Colonel Grayson of Virginia, ten or eleven years after the retreat from Long Island, to which the conversations referred. The eyes of the witness closed too soon to admit of his being cross-examined, but nature comes in with its protest: his story turns on a change of wind, which he represents as having taken place before the council of war was called; now no such change of wind took place before the council of war met, as appears from their unanimous written testimony at the time. (Proceedings of a council of war held August 29, 1776, at head-quarters in Brooklyn, printed by Onderdonk, 161, and in Force's Archives, fifth series, i. 1246.)

The lifting of the fog, and consequent sight of the British fleet, which the biographer dwells upon, is, as far as I know, supported by no witness at all; and this bit of romance, which forms the pivot of the biographer's attribution of special merit to Colonel Reed, is refuted by positive testimony. The sea-fog following the change of wind did not take place till after the retreat began. The accounts of contemporaries all agree that the fog did not rise till the morning of the thirtieth. Account in the Boston "Independent Chronicle" of September 19, 1776: "At sunrise" on the thirtieth. Benjamin Tallmadge's Memoirs, 10, 11: "As the dawn of the day approached, a very dense fog began to rise." Gordon's History of the American Revolution, ii. 314, English edition of 1788: "A thick fog about two o'clock in the morning." Gordon wrote from the letters of Glover, and from the information of persons who were present. Note to the Thanksgiving sermon of Dr. John Rogers of New York, delivered in New York, December 11, 1783, and printed in 1784: "Not long after day broke, a heavy fog rose." Graydon makes his first mention of the fog in his account of what happened in the morning of the thirtieth. Some of these authorities are cited in the accurate and judicious work of Henry Onderdonk, Jr.: Revolutionary Incidents in Suffolk and King's Counties, 158, 162.

Graydon, who is cited by Reed's biographer as a corroborative witness, leaves Mifflin out of the number of those who spoke with Reed in favor of a retreat. (Littell's edition of Graydon's Memoirs, 166.)

The biographer of Reed seems not to have borne in mind the wonderful power of secrecy of Washington, in which he excelled even Franklin; for Franklin sometimes left the impression that he knew more than he was willing to utter, but Washington always seemed to have said all that the occasion required. The perfect unity and method of the retreat prove the controlling mind of one master. Washington's order given to Heath, who was stationed at King's Bridge, to provide boats for transportation, may be found in Force (American Archives, fifth series, i. 1211); how Heath understood and executed it is told by Heath himself (Heath's Memoirs, 57). Of the precise hour in which Washington's order to Heath was issued or received I have found no minute; but that it must have been issued soon after daylight on the twenty-ninth appears from this: the messenger who bore it had to cross the East River against a strong head-wind, and to travel about fifteen miles by land; and Heath received the order in season to execute it thoroughly well, and he makes no complaint of any want of time or necessity for hurry. The council of war was not held till "late in the day," as we know from a member of the council itself, writing within a few days of the event. (Brigadier-General John Morin Scott to John Jay, September 6, 1776.) It follows, therefore, if Reed during the day was ignorant of Washington's design to retreat from Long Island, that Washington kept it as much a secret from him as he did from others. I have met with no evidence that Washington, before noon, communicated his intentions to more than two persons on Long Island, namely, to Mifflin, through whom the order was sent to Heath, and to Colonel Joseph Trumbull, the commissary-general,

through whom a message was transmitted to Hugh Hughes, the acting quartermaster-general in New York. (Memorial of Hugh Hughes, 32, &c.) All the orders relating to the retreat were veiled under the appearance of a movement against the enemy.

Why Washington decided to retreat from Long Island is rightly told in what remains of a letter written on the thirtieth of August, 1776, by Joseph Reed to William Livingston of New Jersey, and printed in Sedgwick's Life of Livingston, 201. That Washington was deliberately resolved "to avoid a general action," and put as little as possible to risk, we have under his own hand. (Sparks's Washington, iv. 81.)

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROGRESS OF THE HOWES.

AUGUST 30—SEPTEMBER 15, 1776.

CARE sat heavily on the brow of the young people, who were to be formed to fortitude by tribulation, and endeared to after ages by familiarity with sorrows. 1776. Aug. 30. After the disaster of Long Island, Lord Howe received Sullivan on board of the "Eagle" with hospitable courtesy, approved his immediate exchange for General Prescott, who was at Philadelphia, and then spoke so strongly of his own difficulty in recognising congress as a legal body, of the prevailing misconception respecting his authority to enter into any discussion of grievances, and yet of his ample powers to open a way for their redress, that the American general proposed to visit Philadelphia as a go-between, and undeceive those who entertained so confined an opinion. His indiscretion was without bounds; volunteering to act as a messenger from an enemy of his country to its government, he took no minute of the offer which he was to bear, relying only on his recollection of desultory conversations. A few hours after the troops passed over from Long Island, he followed on parole. The American commander in chief disapproved his mission, but deemed it not right to prohibit by military authority an appeal to the civil power.

For the time Washington could only hope to keep at bay the great army opposed to him. The dilatoriness of his antagonist left him leisure to withdraw the garrison from Governor's Island, where Prescott ran almost as great a risk of captivity as at Bunker Hill; but the inhabitants of Long Island were left at the mercy of the English, Aug. 30, 31.

and some from choice, some to escape the prison-ship and ruin from confiscation, took the engagement of allegiance. Yet the delay caused by the defence of Brooklyn had done much towards preventing a junction with Carleton. Of this the thought was now abandoned for the season; and, in a letter to Germain, the British general frankly announced the necessity of another campaign. His report of the events on Long Island hid his chagrin at the escape of Washington's army under boastful exaggerations, magnifying the force which he encountered two or three times, the killed and wounded eight or ten times, and enlarging the number of his prisoners. His own loss he somewhat diminished.

1776. Sept.

Conscious that congress were expecting impossibilities, Washington saw the necessity of setting forth to them plainly the condition of his army. He reminded them of his frequent representation, that the public safety required enlistments for the war; the defeat on Long Island had impaired the confidence of the troops in their officers and in one another; the militia, dismayed, intractable, and impatient, went off by half-companies, by companies, and almost by whole regiments at a time; their example impaired all subordination, and forced him to confess his "want of confidence in the generality of the troops;" the city of New York must be abandoned; and the necessity for doing it was so imminent, that the question whether its houses should be left to stand as winter-quarters for the enemy would "admit of but little time for deliberation." His judgment was right; Rufus Putnam, his ablest engineer, reported that the enemy, from their command of the water, could land where they pleased at any point between the bay and Throg's Neck; while Greene advised a general retreat, and that the city and its suburbs should be burnt.

Sept. 2.

When, on the second of September, Sullivan was introduced to the congress, John Adams broke out to the member who sat next him: "Oh, the decoy-duck! would that the first bullet from the enemy in the defeat on Long Island had passed through his brain!" In delivering his message, the emissary went so far as to affirm that Lord

Howe said "he was ever against taxing us; that he was very sure America could not be conquered; that he would set aside the acts of parliament for taxing the colonies and changing the charter of Massachusetts." Congress directed Sullivan to reduce his communication to writing. He did so, and presented it the next morning. Its purport was "that, though Lord Howe could not at present treat with congress as such, he was very desirous as a private gentleman to meet some of its members as private gentlemen; that he, in conjunction with General Howe, had full powers to compromise the dispute between Great Britain and America; that he wished a compact might be settled at this time; that in case, upon conference, they should find any probable ground of an accommodation, the authority of congress must be afterwards acknowledged." 1776. Sept. 3.

Having received this paper, which proposed the abandonment of independence and of union, and the abdication of congress, that body proceeded to the business of the day. In committee of the whole, they took into consideration the unreserved confession of Washington, that he had not a force adequate to the defence of New York. They were unwilling to give room for a suspicion of their firmness by consenting in advance to the surrender of that city; they therefore decided that "it should in no event be damaged, for they had no doubt of being able to recover it, even though the enemy should obtain possession of it for a time." They ordered for its defence three more battalions from Virginia, two from North Carolina, and one from Rhode Island; and they invited the assemblies and conventions of every state north of Virginia to forward all possible aid; but this reliance on speculative re-enforcements increased the difficulties and peril which environed Washington.

On the fourth and fifth, congress debated the message of Lord Howe. Witherspoon, with a very great majority of the members, looked upon it as an insult. "We have lost a battle and a small island," said Rush, "but we have not lost a state; why then should we be discouraged? Sept. 4, 5.

Or why should we be discouraged, even if we had lost a state? If there were but one state left, still that one should peril all for independence." George Ross sustained his colleague. "The panic may seize whom it will," wrote John Adams; "it shall not seize me;" and, like Rush and Witherspoon, he spoke vehemently against the proposed conference. On the other hand, Edward Rutledge favored it, as a means of procrastination; and at last New Hampshire, Connecticut, and even Virginia gave way for the sake of quieting the people. Sullivan was directed to deliver to Lord Howe a written "resolve, that the congress, being the representatives of the free and independent states of America, could not send their members to confer with him in their private characters; but, ever desirous of peace on reasonable terms, they would send a committee of their body to learn what authority he had to treat with persons authorized by them, and to hear his propositions." On the sixth, the committee was elected by ballot, and the choice fell on Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge. For the future, it was ordered that no proposals for peace between Great Britain and the United States should be received, unless they should be made in writing, and should recognise the authority of the states in congress.

1776. Sept. 6.

Notwithstanding the desire of congress that New York should be held, Washington remained convinced that it was impossible; and on the seventh he convened his general officers, in the hope of their concurrence and support. The case was plain; yet Mercer, who was detained at Amboy, wrote his untimely wish to maintain the post; others interpreted the vote of congress as an injunction that it was to be defended at all hazards; and as one third of the army had no tents, and one fourth were sick, many clung to the city for shelter. The majority, therefore, decided to hold it with five thousand men, and to distribute the rest of the army between King's Bridge and Harlem Heights. The power to overrule the majority of his general officers had not been explicitly conferred on Washington; and, as he might be considered but as first among his peers, he most reluctantly submitted to their

Sept. 7.

advice till he could convince congress that the proposed evacuation was an absolute necessity. Meantime, he removed such stores as were not immediately needed, and began the slow and difficult task of transferring the sick to the inland towns of New Jersey.

The plainly perceptible hesitancy of decision was very unjustly attributed by the ill-informed to the general himself. In August, congress had sent for Charles Lee, as the proper head of the army, should any accident befall Washington; and now officers of merit as well as privates "were continually praying most earnestly for the arrival of General Lee as their guardian angel."

Abandoned by his council, Washington still adhered firmly to his plan for the campaign; and, foreseeing the danger of risking by delay the loss of arms and stores, he appealed to congress with increased earnestness. While the troops voted him did not arrive, the militia were all the time returning home, so that the number from Connecticut was reduced from six thousand to two thousand. 1776. Sept. 8.

To those members of congress whose unreasoning zeal would not surrender an inch of land, still less the city which was the point of connection between the north and the south, least of all fortifications which represented the labor of thousands of men during many months, Washington replied: "To be prepared at each point of attack has occasioned an expense of labor which now seems useless, and is regretted by those who form a judgment from after-knowledge; but men of discernment will think differently, and see by such works and preparations we have delayed the operations of the campaign till it is too late to effect any capital incursion into the country. It is now obvious that they mean to enclose us on the island of New York, by taking post in my rear, while the shipping secures the front; and thus oblige us to fight them on their own terms, or surrender at discretion. On every side there is a choice of difficulties. Every measure is to be formed with some apprehension that all our troops will not do their duty. On our side, the war should be defensive; it has even been called a war of posts; we should on all occasions avoid a

general action, and never be drawn into a necessity to put any thing to risk. Persuaded that it would be presumptuous to draw out our young troops into open ground against their superiors both in number and discipline, I have never spared the spade and pickaxe. I have not found that readiness to defend even strong posts at all hazards which is necessary to derive the greatest benefit from them. We are now in a post strong but not impregnable; nay, acknowledged by every man of judgment to be untenable. It has been considered as the key to the northern country; but by establishing strong posts at Mount Washington on the upper part of this island, and on the Jersey side opposite to it, and by the assistance of obstructions in the water, not only the navigation of Hudson River, but a communication between the northern and southern states, may be more effectually secured. I am sensible that a retreating army is encircled with difficulties, that declining an engagement subjects a general to reproach, and may throw discouragement over the minds of many; but, when the fate of America may be at stake on the issue, we should protract the war, if possible. That the enemy mean to winter in New York, there can be no doubt; that they can drive us out is equally clear; nothing seems to remain but to determine the time of their taking possession."

1776. Sept. 10. Congress received with coldness this remonstrance of Washington; but it was unanswerable, and they resolved, on the tenth, that it had not been "their sense that any part of the army should remain in New York a moment longer than he should think it proper for the public service."

Sept. 11. On the eleventh, Lord Howe sent his barge for Franklin, John Adams, and Rutledge; relying on his honor, they took with them the officer sent as a hostage for their security. They were met by him at the water's edge, and conducted through files of grenadiers, armed with fixed bayonets, to a large stone house, where, in a room carpeted with moss and green boughs, they partook of an excellent collation. In the discussion of business, a difficulty presented itself at the outset. As they had been

formally announced as a committee from congress, Lord Howe premised, with some embarrassment of manner, that he was bound to say he conversed with them as private individuals. At this, John Adams came to his relief, saying: "Consider us in any light you please, except that of British subjects." During a conversation which lasted for several hours, Lord Howe was discursive in his remarks: he went back to the last petition of congress to the king, and to the time anterior to the declaration of independence; he hoped that this interview might prepare the way for the return of America to her allegiance, and for an accommodation of the two countries. To bring the discussion to a point, Edward Rutledge cited to him the declaration of Sullivan, "that he would set the acts of parliament wholly aside, because parliament had no right to tax America, or meddle with her internal polity." 1776. Sept. 11.

Lord Howe had no discretionary power whatever with regard to these two vital points in the controversy; he therefore answered Rutledge, like a man of honor, with truth and frankness, "that Sullivan had extended his words much beyond their import; that, while the king and ministry were willing that instructions and acts of parliament complained of should be revised, his commission in respect to them was confined to powers of consultation with private persons." Franklin inquired if the commissioners would receive and report propositions from the Americans; as no objection was interposed, he represented "that it was the duty of good men on both sides of the water to promote peace by an acknowledgment of American independence, and a treaty of friendship and alliance between the two countries;" and he endeavored to prove that Great Britain would derive more durable advantages from such an alliance than from the connection which it was the object of the commission to restore. Lord Howe did not fail to communicate to his government this overture, which he in his heart was beginning to approve. The committee of congress, on their return to Philadelphia, reported that he had made no proposition of peace, except that the colonies should return to their allegiance to the government of

Great Britain; and that his commission did not appear to contain any other authority of importance than what was expressed in the act of parliament, namely, that of granting pardons, and declaring America, or any part of it, to be in the king's peace, upon submission. "Our sins against God," wrote the governor of Connecticut, "need pardon from the supreme Director of all events; the rebels who need pardon from the king of Britain are not yet discovered."

By this time, the army of General Howe extended along the high ground that overlooks the East River and the sound, from Brooklyn to Flushing, and occupied the two islands which we call Ward's and Randall's; a battery erected at Astoria replied to the American works on the point just north of Hellgate ferry. Night after night, boats came in and anchored just above Bushwick. On the
1776. Sept. 12. twelfth, Washington, supported by the written request of Greene and six brigadiers, reconvened his council of war at the quarters of Macdougall; and this time it was decided to abandon the lower part of the island, none dissenting but Spencer from sheer ignorance and dulness, Heath from dishonesty, and George Clinton from stubborn zeal. The council was hardly over, when Washington was once more in the lines; and at evening the Americans under his eye doubled their posts along the East River. He was seen by the Hessians; and Krug, a captain of the Hessian artillery, twice in succession pointed cannon at him and his staff, and was aiming a third shot, as
Sept. 13. he rode on. The thirteenth, the anniversary of the victory on the Plains of Abraham, in which Howe bore an honorable part, was selected for the landing of the British in New York; the watchword was "Quebec," the countersign "Wolfe;" but the ships-of-war that were to cover the landing caused delay. In the afternoon, four of them, keeping up an incessant fire, and supported by the cannon on Governor's Island, sailed past the American batteries into the East River, and anchored opposite the present Thirteenth Street. Washington kept a close watch on their movements, and one of their shot struck within
Sept. 14. six feet of him. During the fourteenth, he did all

that his very scanty means of transportation would allow, to save his stores and artillery. About sunset, six more British armed ships went up the East River. In one more day, the city would have been evacuated.

On the fifteenth, three ships-of-war ascended the Hudson as far as Bloomingdale, which put a stop to the removal of army stores by water. At eleven, the ships-of-war which were anchored in the stream below Blackwell's Island began a heavy cannonade, to scour the grounds; at the same time, eighty-four boats laden with troops, under the direction of Admiral Hotham, came out of Newtown Creek, and with a southerly wind sailed up the East River in four columns; till, on a signal, they formed in line, and, aided by oars and the sweeping tide, came to the shore between Turtle Bay and the city, in array for battle. At the sound of the first cannon, Washington, who had supposed the principal landing would be made at Harlem or Morrisania, rode "with all possible despatch" towards Kip's Bay, near Thirty-fourth Street; as he drew near, he found the men who had been posted in the lines running away, and the brigades of Fellows of Massachusetts and Parsons of Connecticut, that were to have supported them, flying in every direction, heedless of the exertions of their generals. Putnam's division of about four thousand troops was still in the lower city, sure to be cut off, unless the British could be delayed. When all else fails, the commander in chief must in person give the example of daring: Washington presented himself to lead any body of men, however small, who would make an effort to hold the advancing forces in check. He used every means to rally the fugitives, get them into some order, and reanimate their courage; but, on the appearance of a party of not more than sixty or seventy, they ran away in the greatest confusion without firing a single shot, panic-stricken from fear of having their retreat cut off, leaving him on the ground within eighty yards of the enemy. "Are these the men by whom I am expected to defend the liberties of America?" he asked of himself; and he seemed to seek death rather than life. Being reminded by the officers nearest him

1776. Sept. 15.

that it was in vain to withstand the British alone, he turned to give the wisest orders for the safety of Harlem Heights, and for guarding against ill consequences from the morning's disaster.

1776. Sept. 15. As the Hessians took immediate possession of the breastworks which guarded the Boston road, near the present Lexington Avenue, the fugitive brigades fled, not without loss, across woody fields to Bloomingdale. At ten minutes past three in the afternoon, the American colors were struck on the old Fort George, and the English flag was raised by Lord Dunmore. Most of Putnam's division escaped by a road very near the Hudson; its commander, heedless of the intense heat of the day, rode from post to post to call off the pickets and guards. Silliman's brigade threw itself in despair into the redoubt of Bunker Hill, where Knox, at the head of the artillery, thought only of a gallant defence; but Burr, who was one of Putnam's aids, rode up to show them that a retreat was practicable, and guided them by way of the old Monument Lane to the west side of the island, where they marched along the winding road now superseded by the Eighth Avenue, and regained the Bloomingdale road near the present Sixtieth Street.

The respite which saved Putnam's division was due to Mary Lindley, the wife of Robert Murray. When the British army drew near her house on Incleberg, as Murray Hill was then called, Howe and his officers, ordering a halt, accepted her invitation to a lunch; and by the excellence of her viands and old Madeira wine, and by the good-humor with which she parried Tryon's jests at her sympathy with the rebels, she whiled away two hours or more of their time, till every American regiment had escaped. Washington was the last to retire, riding from Bloomingdale but a few moments before it was occupied by the British infantry. The Americans left behind a few heavy cannon, and much of their baggage and stores; fifteen of them were killed; one hundred and fifty-nine were missing, chiefly men who had wilfully loitered behind. The British gained the island as far as the eighth mile-stone, with but two Hessians killed and about twenty British and Hessians wounded.

At night, their bivouac extended from the East River near Hellgate to the Hudson at Bloomingdale. On Harlem Heights the American fugitives, weary from having passed fifteen hours under arms, disheartened by the loss of their tents and blankets, and wet by a cold driving rain that closed the sultry day, lay on their arms with only the sky above them.

NOTE.

The account I have given of Washington's conduct in his attempt to rally the fugitives at Kip's Bay agrees substantially with that of Marshall (Marshall's Washington, i. 101, ed. 1843) and with the matured judgment of Sparks (Life of Washington, 199). Washington was justly vexed at the cowardice of the men whom he had stationed at Kip's Bay; he reported it in unsparing terms to congress, and censured it in general orders. All agree that he attempted, but in vain, to rally the men; no one disputes that, with the good judgment of perfect self-possession, he gave immediately the wisest orders for the safety of the army, nor that his conduct on the occasion struck the army with such awe that he could count on its courage by the dawn of another day. The makers of gossip have gradually embroidered upon the incident of his serious and well-founded displeasure a variety of inconsistent details. Of accounts written within a few days of the events, I find three of importance: Washington to Congress, September 16, 1776, in his Official Letters, i. 246, and in Sparks, iv. 94; Greene to Governor Cooke of Rhode Island, September 17, 1776, in Force, fifth series, ii. 370; and Cæsar Rodney at Philadelphia to Messrs. Read and Mackean, September 18, 1776. The account of Rodney is a report carefully prepared from various sources which he does not specify. I give an extract from it: "From all I can collect, this was the situation of affairs on Sunday morning, when the ships before mentioned began a very heavy firing at Turtle Bay, to scour the country previous to their landing the troops, but hurt nobody, that I can hear of. When the firing ceased, their troops began to land, and ours to run as if the devil was in them. In spite of all the general could do, they never fired one gun. General Washington, having discovered the enemy's intention to land at that place, ordered a re-enforcement, and set out there himself. However, before he got to the place, he met our people running in every direction. He endeavored by persuasion and threats to get them back, but all to no purpose; in short, they ran till they left the general to shift for himself." This letter shows clearly the opinion prevailing among men of sense in Philadelphia at the time. Greene's words are: "Fellows's and Parsons's whole brigade ran away from about fifty men, and left his excellency on the ground within eighty yards of the enemy, so vexed at the infamous conduct of the troops that he sought death rather than life." That Washington sought to shame or

to inspirit his men by setting them an example of desperate courage may be true; certainly a general who chides for cowardice can do it best when he has just given evidence of his own disregard of danger. The embellishments of the narrative, which have been gradually wrought out, till they have become self-contradictory and ludicrous, may be traced to the camp. A bitter and jealous rivalry, which the adjutant-general had assisted to foment, had grown up between the New England troops and those south of New England. Northern men very naturally found excuses for their brethren, and may have thought that Washington censured them too severely; but, while I have had in my hands very many contemporary letters written by New Englanders on the events of this campaign, I have never found in any one of them the least reflection on Washington for his conduct in the field during any part of this day, unless the words of Greene are to be so interpreted. The imputations began with officers south of New England, and were dictated by a zeal to illumine and bring out in bold relief the dastardly behavior of the eastern runaways. The first effort in that direction may be seen in an official letter from Smallwood, the highest Maryland officer, to the convention of his state: "Sixty light infantry, upon the first fire, put to flight two brigades of the Connecticut troops, — wretches who, however strange it may appear, from the brigadier-general down to the private sentinel, were caned and whipped by the Generals Washington, Putnam, and Mifflin, but even this indignity had no weight; they could not be brought to stand one shot." (Colonel Smallwood to Maryland Convention, October 12, 1776, in Force, fifth series, ii. 1013.) This statement, so full of blunders and impossibilities, shows the camp to be not always "a correct source" of information. Gordon comes next; under the date of December 20, 1776, he writes: "His [Washington's] attempts to stop them [the troops] were fruitless, though he drew his sword and threatened to run them through, cocked and snapped his pistols." (Gordon, ii. 327.) Now a man on horseback, "within eighty yards" of an advancing enemy, could not, at one and the same time, have managed his horse and drawn his sword and cocked his two old-fashioned flint-lock horse-pistols. Gordon was capable of prejudice, and was no critic; when he cites a document, I hold it certain that he cites it truly, for I have found it so in every case where I have had occasion to verify his citations; when he tells a story, I hold it certain that some one had told it before; but I have found that his repeating it gives it no sure claim to credence. His work, which, notwithstanding all its faults, is invaluable, is by no means free from tales that, on examination, prove to be untrustworthy. Succeeding writers sometimes find it hard if they cannot add a little to the statements of previous narrators. Ramsay has indulged himself in an exposition of the train of thought which was passing through Washington's mind at the time of the fright and consequent confusion. (Ramsay's Revolution, i. 306, 307.) Heath, publishing "Memoirs" in 1798, improves upon Gordon, and writes from hearsay: "Here it was, as fame hath said, that General Washington threw his hat on the ground."

(Heath's Memoirs, 60.) Graydon repeats the hearsay, but without vouching for it, "that the general lost all patience, throwing his hat upon the ground in a transport of rage and indignation." (Graydon in Littell's edition, 174.) Now Washington was on horseback; did he get off his horse to pick up his hat in the face of Cornwallis and Clinton? Did he ride about in sight of the British and Hessians and of his own army for the rest of the day bareheaded, or in a begrimed hat and plume? I am almost ashamed of exposing so foolish a story, which rests on no authority. To sum up the whole: Trustworthy documents prove that the party at Kip's Bay retreated in a cowardly manner; that Washington was angry at them for their cowardice, as he ought to have been; that he was the last to consent to turn away from the enemy; that he then with promptness and unimpeached good judgment did every thing which remained to be done; that on the next day he had a more perfect command of the army, and more assurance of their courage, than for several weeks before.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EMBARRASSMENTS OF AMERICA.

SEPTEMBER 15–30, 1776.

THE cowardice of the troops at Kip's Bay was reported to congress by Washington with unsparing severity; and was rebuked in a general order, menacing instant death as the punishment of cowardice on the field. Meantime, he used every method to revive the courage of his army. On the night of their reaching Harlem Heights, he sent orders to Silas Talbot, who had accepted the perilous command of a fire-brig, to make an attempt on the ships-of-war that lay in the Hudson, near the present One hundred and twenty-fourth Street. At two o'clock in the dark and cloudy morning of the sixteenth, the officer left his hiding-place, three or four miles above Fort Lee, ran down the river under a fair wind, and, grappling the "Renommé," set his brig on fire. He was burnt almost to blindness, yet escaped with his crew; the "Renommé" freed itself without injury; but, with the other ships-of-war, quitted its moorings, and went out of the stream.

1776. Sept. 15.

Sept. 16.

At a later hour, American troops marched in good order from Fort Washington, and extended their left wing as far as Harlem. As an offset to this movement, Leslie, who commanded the British advanced posts, led the second battalion of light infantry, with two battalions of Highlanders and seven field-pieces, into a wood on the hill which lies east of Bloomingdale road and overlooks Manhattanville. From this detachment two or three companies of light infantry descended into the plain, drove in an American picket, and sounded their bugles in boastful defiance.

Engaging their attention by preparations for attacking them in front, Washington ordered Major Leitch with three companies of Weedon's Virginia regiment, and Colonel Knowlton with his volunteer rangers, to prepare secretly an attack on the rear of the main detachment in the wood; and Reed, who best knew the ground, acted as their guide. Under the lead of George Clinton, the American party which engaged the light infantry in front compelled them twice to retreat, and drove them back to the force with Leslie. The Americans in pursuit clambered up the rocks, and a very brisk action ensued, which continued about two hours. Knowlton and Leitch began their attack too soon, on the flank rather than in the rear. Reed's horse was wounded under him; in a little time, Leitch was brought off with three balls through his side. Soon after, Knowlton was mortally wounded; in the agonies of death, all his inquiry was if the enemy had been beaten. Notwithstanding the loss of their leaders, the men resolutely continued the engagement. Washington advanced to their support part of two Maryland regiments, with detachments of New Englanders; Putnam and Greene, as well as Tilghman and others of the general's staff, joined in the action to animate the troops, who charged with the greatest intrepidity. The British, worsted a third time, fell back into an orchard, and from thence across a hollow and up the hill which lies east of the Eighth Avenue and overlooks the country far and wide. Their condition was desperate: they had lost seventy killed and two hundred and ten wounded; the Highlanders had fired their last cartridge; without speedy relief, they must certainly be cut off. The Hessian yagers were the first of the re-enforcements to reach the hill, and were in season to share in the action, suffering a loss of one officer and seven men wounded. "Columns of English infantry, ordered at eleven to stand to their arms, were instantly trotted about three miles, without a halt to take breath;" and the Von Linsing battalion was seen to draw near, while two other German battalions occupied Macgowan's Pass. Washington, unwilling to risk a general action, ordered a retreat. This skirmish, in its effects, was

1776. Sept. 16.

almost equal to a victory; it restored the spirit and confidence of the Americans. Their loss was about sixty killed and wounded; but among these was Knowlton, who would have been an honor to any country, and Leitch, one of Virginia's worthiest sons.

Howe would never own how much he had suffered; his general orders rebuked Leslie for imprudence. The result confirmed him in his caution. The ground in front of the Americans was so difficult and so well fortified that he could not hope to carry it by storm; had he by a circuitous route thrown the main body of his army in their rear, he would have left the city of New York and its garrison at Washington's mercy; he therefore waited more than three weeks, partly to collect means of transportation, and partly to form redoubts across the island.

During the delay, Lord Howe and his brother, 1776. Sept. 19. on the nineteenth, in a joint declaration, going far beyond the form prepared by the solicitor-general, promised in the king's name a revision of his instructions, and his concurrence in the revisal of all acts by which his subjects in the colonies might think themselves aggrieved; and, appealing from congress, they invited all well-affected subjects to a conference. The paper was disingenuous; for the instructions to the commissioners, which were carefully kept secret, demanded as preliminary conditions grants of revenue and further changes of charters. Washington saw through the artifice. Lord Howe can escape conviction for duplicity, only by supposing that he was duped by his own wishes to misinterpret his powers; but the crafty appeal was wisely timed for its end; for there were signs of despondency and discontent in the New York counties on the Hudson, in New Jersey, and still more in Pennsylvania.

Sept. 21. About one o'clock in the morning of the twenty-first, more than five days after New York had been in the exclusive possession of the British, a fire chanced to break out in a small wooden public-house of low character, near Whitehall slip. The weather had been hot and dry; a fresh gale was blowing from the south-west; the flames spread rapidly; and the east side of Broadway, as far as

Exchange Place, became a heap of ruins. The British troops, angry at the destruction of houses which they had looked upon as their shelter for the coming winter, haunted with the thought of incendiaries, and unwilling to own the consequences of their own careless carousals, seized persons who had come out to save property from destruction, and, without trial or inquiry, killed some with the bayonet, tossed others into the flames, and one, who happened to be a royalist, they hanged by the heels till he died. The wind veering to the south-east, the fire crossed Broadway above Morris Street, destroyed Trinity church and the Lutheran church, and, sparing St. Paul's chapel, extended to Barclay Street. The flames were arrested, not so much by the English guard as by the sailors whom the admiral sent on shore, and who paid themselves by plundering houses that escaped. Of the four thousand tenements of the city, more than four hundred were burnt down. In his report, Howe, without the slightest ground, attributed the accident to a conspiracy.

When, after the disasters on Long Island, Washington needed to know in what quarter the attack of the British was to be expected, Nathan Hale, a captain in Knowlton's regiment, a graduate of Yale College, an excellent scholar, comparatively a veteran in the service, having served with Knowlton at Cambridge, but three months beyond one-and-twenty, yet already betrothed, volunteered to venture, under a disguise, within the British lines. Just at the moment of his return, he was seized and carried before General Howe, in New York; he frankly avowed his name and rank in the American army, and his purpose, which his papers confirmed; and, without a trial, Howe ordered him to be executed the following morning as a spy. That night he was exposed to the insolent cruelty of his jailer. The consolation of seeing a clergyman was denied him; his request for a Bible was refused. The more humane British officer who was deputed to superintend his execution furnished him means to write to his mother and to a comrade in arms. On the morning of the twenty-second, as he ascended the gallows, he said:

1776. Sept. 21.

Sept. 22.

"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." The provost-marshal destroyed his letters, as if grudging his friends a knowledge of the firmness with which he had contemplated death. His countrymen never pretended that the beauty of his character should have exempted him from the penalty which the laws of war imposed; they complained only that the hours of his imprisonment were embittered by barbarous harshness.

The Americans kept up the system of wearing out their enemy by continual skirmishes and alarms. On the
1776. Sept. 23. twenty-third, at the glimmer of dawn, in a well-planned but unsuccessful attempt to recapture Randall's Island, Thomas Henly, of Charlestown, Massachusetts, "one of the best officers in the army," lost his life. He was buried by the side of Knowlton, within the present Trinity cemetery.

Sept. 24. The prisoners of war, five hundred in number, whom Carleton had sent from Quebec on parole, were landed on the twenty-fourth from shallops at Elizabeth Point. It wanted but an hour or two of midnight; the moon, nearly full, shone cloudlessly; Morgan, as he sprung from the bow of the boat, fell on the earth as if to clasp it, and cried: "O my country!" They all ran a race to Elizabethtown, where, too happy to sleep, they passed the night in singing, dancing, screaming, and raising the Indian halloo from excess of joy. On hearing that Morgan was returned, Washington hastened his exchange, and recommended his promotion. Next to Washington, Morgan was the best officer whom Virginia sent into the field, though she raises no statue to the incomparable leader of her light troops.

Meantime, the continental government proceeded with the dilatoriness and hesitancy which belonged to the feebleness of its organization. The committee for confederation and that for foreign alliances had been appointed in June, in connection with the committee for declaring independence. Seemingly irreconcilable differences of opinion left congress no heart to continue the work of confederation; Edward Rutledge despaired of success, unless the states

should appoint a special convention, to be formed of new representatives, chosen for this purpose alone.

On the seventeenth, after many weeks of delibera- 1776. Sept. 17.
tion, the members of congress adopted an elaborate plan of a treaty to be proposed to France. Its terms betray the boundlessness of their aspirations and the lurking uncertainty of their hopes. They wished France to engage in a separate war with Great Britain, and by this diversion to leave America the opportunity of establishing her independence. They were willing to assure to Spain freedom from molestation in its territories; they renounced in favor of France all eventual conquests in the West Indies; but they claimed the sole right of acquiring British continental America, and all adjacent islands, including the Bermudas, Cape Breton, and Newfoundland. It applied the maxim of monopoly to the fisheries: the king of France might retain his exclusive rights on the banks of Newfoundland, as recognised by England in the treaty of 1763; but his subjects were not to fish "in the havens, bays, creeks, roads, coasts, or places," which the United States were to win. In maritime law, the rising nation avowed the principle that free ships impart freedom to goods; that a neutral power may lawfully trade with a belligerent. Privateering was not abolished, but much restricted, and in its worst form was to be punished as piracy. The young republic, in this moment of her greatest need, was not willing to make one common cause with France, nor even to abstain from commerce with England; she only offered not to assist Great Britain in the war on France, nor trade with that power in contraband goods. At most, the commissioners were permitted to stipulate that the United States would never again be subject to the crown or the parliament of Great Britain; and, in case France should become involved in the war, that neither party should make a definitive treaty of peace without six months' notice to the other. The commissioners were further instructed to solicit muskets and bayonets, ammunition, and brass field-pieces, to be sent under convoy by France; and it was added: "It will be proper for you to press for the immediate and explicit declaration of France in our

favor, upon a suggestion that a reunion with Great Britain may be the consequence of a delay."

In the selection of the three members of the commission, Franklin was placed at its head; Deane, with whom Robert Morris had associated an unworthy member of his own family as a joint commercial agent in France, was chosen next; to them was added Jefferson, who, early in August, had retired from congress to assist his native state in adapting its code of laws to its new life as a republic. When Jefferson declared himself constrained to decline the appointment, which to him was so full of promise, it was given to Arthur Lee. Thus the United States were to be represented in France, to its people, and to the elder house of Bourbon, by a treacherous merchant, by a barrister who, otherwise a patriot, was consumed by malignant envy, and by Franklin, the greatest diplomatist of his century. Franklin proposed that the commission should have power to treat forthwith for peace with England.

1776. Sept.

The attempt to raise up a navy encountered many difficulties. There was a want of guns, canvas, and ammunition. In the preceding December, congress had ordered the construction of thirteen ships-of-war, each of which was to carry from twenty-four to thirty-two guns; but not one of them was ready for sea, and the national cruisers consisted of about twelve merchant vessels, purchased and equipped at intervals. The officers, of whom the first formal appointment was made on the twenty-second of December, 1775, and included the names of Nicholas Biddle and John Paul Jones, were necessarily taken from merchant ships. The unfitness of the highest officer in the naval service, as displayed in his management of a squadron which went to sea in the spring, had just been exposed by an inquiry, and, in spite of the support of the eastern states, he had been censured by a vote of congress; yet, from tenderness to his brother, who was a member of congress, a motion for his dismissal was obstructed, and a majority ordered the aged and incompetent man to resume the command, which he was sure to disgrace. American privateers, in the year 1776, captured three hundred and

forty-two British vessels; and these volunteer adventures were so lucrative that none of the comparatively few sailors who entered upon the public service would enlist for more than a twelvemonth, and most of them would engage only for one cruise. Hopkins did not lead his squadron again to sea; but John Paul Jones and others gained honor as commanders of single ships. 1776. Sept.

The great need of the country was an effective force on land. Before the middle of June, the committee on spies, of which John Adams and Edward Rutledge were members, were desired to revise the articles of war; yet more than three months elapsed before the adoption of an improved code, formed on the British regulations.

The country was upon the eve of a dissolution of its army; Washington, almost a year before, had foretold to congress the evils of their system with as much accuracy as if he "had spoken with a prophetic spirit." His condition at present was more critical than before, for a larger force was arrayed against him, and the enthusiasm of the people had been deadened by misfortunes and time. An unskilled volunteer is no match for a well-trained veteran. When, under the first impulse of irritated feeling, men fly to arms, the boldest and most energetic are the first to come forward; as the season of cooler reasoning returns, the earliest in the field begin to murmur at the inequality of service for the common good. Levies of militia, poorly equipped, suddenly called for a few weeks from the tender scenes of domestic life, unused to the din of arms, and conscious of their own inexperience and ignorance, are distrustful of themselves when opposed to skilful and well-appointed troops, and fly from the shadow of danger. Unpractised in subordination, they are made more restless by the change of lodging and food; their thoughts go back to their families, their fields, their flocks and herds; they begin to repine, and dejection brings on sickness and death, or an unconquerable yearning for home. They cost as much as a regular army of twice their number. Yet raw troops, levied for four months, or even but for one, formed the chief part of Washington's force. The want of good offi-

cers was still more to be complained of; especially those from New England did not fitly represent the talent and military zeal of that part of the country. The war had lasted nearly seventeen months before congress could be partially divested of their dread of a standing army, or give up the idea of primarily relying for defence on the militia of the states nearest the scene of war. At last, on the sixteenth of September, they resolved that eighty-eight battalions be enlisted as soon as possible to serve during the war; but the inducements which they offered for such enlistment were inadequate; moreover, they changed the mode of raising regiments. The men in the army, whose term would expire with the year, had been enlisted directly by continental agents and officers; congress now apportioned to the thirteen states their respective quotas; and this reference of the subject to so many separate legislatures or governments could not but occasion a delay of several months, even if the best will should prevail. Congress had no magazines; they therefore further left the states to provide arms and clothing. To complete the difficulty of organizing a national army, they yielded to the several states the appointment of all officers, except general officers, even to the filling up of vacancies; so that no discretion was reserved to the commander in chief, or formally even to themselves, to promote the meritorious. Vacancies must remain undisposed of till the states, each for itself, should intervene; and it was feared that those governments would be swayed by the querulous importunities of the least worthy applicants.

1776. Sept. 16.

Before he received official notice of the new arrangement, Washington borrowed hours allotted to sleep to convey to congress with sincerity and freedom his thoughts on the proper organization of the army. For himself he wished no recompense but such changes as would enable him to give satisfaction to the public; but, said he, "experience, which is the best criterion to work by, so fully, clearly, and decisively reprobates the practice of trusting to militia, that no man who regards order, regularity, and economy, or his own honor, character, or peace of mind, will risk them upon

this issue. The evils to be apprehended from a standing army are remote, and, situated as we are, not at all to be dreaded; but the consequence of wanting one is certain and inevitable ruin. This contest is not likely to be the work of a day; and, to carry on the war systematically, you must establish your army upon a permanent footing." The materials, he said, were excellent; to induce enlistments for the continuance of the war, he urged the offer of a sufficient bounty; for the officers, he advised proper care in their nomination, and such pay as would encourage "gentlemen" and persons of liberal sentiments to engage: in this manner, they would in a little time have an army able to cope with any adversary. 1776. Sept.

These earnest expostulations commanded little more respect from congress than a reference to a committee; three of its members had been deputed to repair to the camp on Harlem Heights, but their mission was attended by no perceptible results; troops continued to be levied by requisitions on the several states, and officers to be nominated by local authorities, without due regard to their qualifications. Washington, therefore, reluctantly bade adieu to every present hope of getting an efficient army; and yet neither the neglect, distrust, and interference of congress, nor the occasional decline of zeal in the people of some of the states, nor the want of able or even of competent subordinates, nor the melting away of his force by the returning of his troops at the end of their term of enlistment, could ever for one moment make him waver in his purpose of perseverance to the end. No provocation could force from his pen one word of personal petulance, or even the momentary expression of a wish to resign his place.

His reiterated desire that the officers might be selected from among "gentlemen" meant no more than that the choice might fall on men who would be alive to the sense of their responsibility; he befriended and honored true merit wherever it was found. Notwithstanding the warmth of his entreaties for a standing force, Washington always trusted the people; his sympathy with them was perfect, and his abiding judgment of them just; but he wished them to be

trained under able commanders, and bound to the country and to one another to persevere in arms like himself until their work was done. So it had been in England during the civil wars of the republic. This organization could not be fully attained in the United States, but the inhabitants, without being permanently embodied, proved their efficiency by untiring zeal and vigilance and courage; and it was by them that American liberty was asserted, defended, and made triumphant. To undisciplined militia belonged the honors of Concord and Lexington; militia withstood the British at Bunker Hill; by the aid of militia an army of veterans was driven from Boston; and we shall see the unprosperous tide of affairs, in the central states, in the north, and in the south, turned by the sudden uprising of devoted volunteers. Yet, for the time, the bravest had moments of despondency. Robert Morris, the most sanguine of American statesmen, feared that General Howe would not leave time for a diversion from France; "I confess," he wrote, "as things appear to me, the prospect is gloomy."

1776. Sept.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COURSE OF OPINION IN ENGLAND.

SEPTEMBER 28—NOVEMBER, 1776.

In England the national spirit was every day becoming more vehement against the Americans; and, as their demand had changed from redress to independence, ninety-nine out of one hundred of their old well-wishers desired their subjection. The account of the success on Long Island, received just before the end of September, strengthened the hope that the junction of the armies of Howe and Carleton would reduce the province of New York, restore a legislative government under the crown, dissolve the loosely joined confederacy, and force the colonies to make their peace one by one. 1776. Sept.

While Germain attributed "infinite honor to Lord Howe, the all-inspecting admiral so deservedly beloved and admired by men and officers," he strained after words to praise "the inborn courage and active spirit" of General Howe, whom he described as "uniting to the fire of youth all the wisdom of experience," and whom the king nominated a knight-companion of the order of the Bath. The cause of the Americans seeming now to be lost, Fox wrote to Rockingham: "It should be a point of honor among us all to support the American pretensions in adversity as much as we did in their prosperity, and never desert those who have acted unsuccessfully upon whig principles." Oct.

The session of parliament was at hand, and the whig party was divided; Rockingham, Burke, and their friends proposed to stay away, assigning as their motive that their

opposition did but strengthen the ministry by exhibiting their weakness. Adhering still more closely than ever to the principles of free government, Fox remonstrated with them earnestly and wisely: "I conjure you, over and over again, to consider the importance of the crisis; secession at present would be considered as running away from the conquerors, and giving up a cause which we think no longer tenable." But to an insurrection that seemed in its last agony they would not offer independence; they therefore kept aloof for the time, willing to step in on the side of mercy when the ministers should have beaten down the rebellion.

1776. Oct. 31. The king, as he opened parliament on the thirty-first, derived from the declaration of independence "the one great advantage of unanimity at home;" and he calmed moderate men by expressing his desire "to restore to the Americans the blessings of law and liberty."

Lord John Cavendish, who divided the house on the address, objected to the policy and the principles of the ministry: "The unhappy differences with the colonies took their rise from parliamentary proceedings; yet, by the fatal omission of parliamentary authority, the commissioners, nominated apparently for peace, have no legal powers but of giving or withholding pardons; and they cannot relax the severity of a single penal act of parliament. The principles operating among the inhabitants of the colonies in their commotions bear an exact analogy with those which support the most valuable part of our constitution; to extirpate them by the sword, in any part of his majesty's dominions, would establish precedents the most dangerous to the liberties of this kingdom." Johnstone justified the Americans, and railed at the king's speech as a compound of hypocrisy. "It is impossible for this island to conquer and hold America," said Wilkes; "we must recall our fleets and armies, repeal all acts injurious to the Americans, and restore their charters, if we would restore unity to the empire." It was said in debate that the ministry had only the option of abandoning America or carrying it by the sword. "No," said Lord North; "the first measure will be

for some of the colonies to break off from the general confederacy. Reconciliation has constantly been my object; it is my wish to use victory with moderation rather than as an object of triumph." The house was reminded by Barré that both France and Spain might interfere. Germain replied: "Do you suppose the house of Bourbon would like to have the spirit of independence cross the Atlantic, or their own colonists catch fire at the unlimited rights of mankind? They will not be so blind to their own interests. General Howe will put New York at the mercy of the king; after which the legislature will be restored." "Administration," said Fox, "deserve nothing but reproach for having brought the Americans into such a situation that it is impossible for them to pursue any other conduct than what they have pursued. In declaring independence, they have done no more than the English did against James II. The noble lord who spoke last prides himself on a legislature being re-established in New York; it has been very well said that the speech is a hypocritical one; in truth, there is not a little hypocrisy in supposing that a king," — and he made the allusion more direct, by ironically excepting George III., as one who really loved liberty, — "that a common king should be solicitous to establish any thing that depends on a popular assembly. Kings govern by means of popular assemblies, only when they cannot do without them; to suppose a king fond of that mode of governing, is to suppose a chimera. It cannot exist. It is contrary to the nature of things. But if this happy time of law and liberty is to be restored to America, why was it ever disturbed? It reigned there till the abominable doctrine of gaining money by taxes infatuated the heads of our statesmen. Why did you destroy the fair work of so many ages, in order to re-establish it by the bayonets of disciplined Germans? If we are reduced to the dilemma of conquering or abandoning America, I am for abandoning America." 1776. Oct. 31.

This intrepid concession of independence to the colonies thrilled the house of commons. "I never in my life heard a more masterly speech," said Gibbon. "I never knew any one better on any occasion," said Burke.

The division left the ministry in the undisputed possession of power in parliament; but letters from General Howe to the twenty-fifth of September, which were received 1776. Nov. 2. by Germain late at night on the second of November, crushed their hopes of early success in reducing America. The occupation of New York city and of Paulus Hook was announced; but it was plainly seen that the further progress of the army for the season was precarious; that the second division of Hessians had not arrived; that the loyalists among the Americans were not disposed to serve in the war; that there would be no junction with Carleton; that Washington was too strongly posted to be attacked in front, that there were innumerable difficulties in the way of turning him on either side; that there was not the smallest prospect of finishing the contest this campaign, and that success in the next was to be hoped only from such vast preparations as would preclude all thoughts of further resistance. For this end, General Howe asked for ten line-of-battle ships with supernumerary seamen to join the fleet in February, and an indefinite number of recruits from Europe.

These demands Germain could not meet. His gloomy forebodings of failure in the next year, he kept to himself; while his runners about town were taught to screen the ministry by throwing the blame of delays upon the madness or ignorance, the rashness or inactivity, of Clinton, Carleton, and Howe. But he could not conceal the public declaration, in which the two brothers pledged the ministers to concur in the revisal of all the acts of parliament by which the Americans were aggrieved. To test the sincerity of this offer, Lord John Cavendish, on the sixth, moved that the house should resolve itself into a committee to consider of that revisal. The motion perplexed Lord North, who certainly did not wish to root up every chance of reconciliation; but the momentary exigency of the debate outweighed the consideration of a remote people, and forced him to say: "I will never allow the legislative claims of this country to be a grievance, nor relax in pursuing those claims, so long as the Americans, as subjects or independent states,

dispute our power and right of legislation. Let them acknowledge the right, and I shall be ready not only to remedy real grievances, but even, in some instances, to bend to their prejudices." In this manner, the prime minister, with his eyes wide open to the impending calamities, suffered himself to be the instrument of the system which in his heart he at that very time condemned as fraught with mischief to the king and to the country. Fox directed attention to the two principal grievances which needed revision, the assumption of power to raise taxes, and of power to modify or annihilate charters at pleasure. "It is impossible," replied Wedderburn, "to enter upon the question of taxation and charters as a means of reconciliation; the one preliminary point which must be settled is independence; till the spirit of independency is subdued, revisions are idle; the Americans have no terms to demand from your justice, whatever they may hope from your grace and mercy." Lord John Cavendish, on the division, obtained less than fifty votes. 1776. Nov.

From this time, Burke and the friends of Rockingham made an ostentatious display of their secession from parliament; they attended in the morning on private business, but so soon as public business was introduced they made a bow to the speaker and withdrew, leaving the ministers to carry their measures without opposition or debate. But this policy did not suit the ardent genius of Fox, whose sagacity and fearlessness had now made him, at twenty-seven, the most important member of the house of commons.

The character of this unique man was not a chapter of contradictions; each part of his nature was in harmony with all the rest. "Perhaps no human being was ever more perfectly exempt from the taint of malevolence, vanity, or falsehood;" but he had no restraining principles, and looked with contempt on those who had. Priding himself on ignorance of every self-denying virtue, an adept in debauch, and delighting in excesses, he feared nothing. Unlucky at the gaming-table beyond all calculation of chances, draining the cup of pleasure to the dregs, fond of loose women and beloved by them, the delight of profligates, the sport of

usurers, impoverished by his vices, he braved scandal, and gloried in a lordly recklessness of his inability to pay his debts, as if superb ostentation in misfortune raised him above his fellow-men. He had a strong will; but he never used it to bridle his passions, even though their indulgence corrupted his young admirers, and threw upon his own father his enormous debts, contracted at play. Born to wealth and rank and easy access to the service of the king, at heart an aristocrat, he could scoff at monarchy and hold the language of a leveller and a demagogue. He loved poetry and elegant letters, the songs of Homer above all; but science was too dull for him, and even the lucidity and novelty of Adam Smith could not charm him to the study of political economy. His uncurbed licentiousness seemed rather to excite than to exhaust his lofty powers; his perceptions were quick and instinctively true; and in his wildest dissipation he retained an unextinguishable passion for activity of intellect. Living as though men and women were instruments of pleasure, he yet felt himself destined for great things, and called forth to the service of mankind. To be talked about, he would stake all he had and more on a wager; but the all-conquering instinct of his ambition drove him to the house of commons. There his genius was at home; and that body cherished him with the indulgent pride which it always manifests to those who keep up its high reputation with the world. A knotty brow, a dark brown complexion, thick, shaggy eyebrows, and a compact frame marked a rugged audacity and a commanding energy, which made him rude and terrible as an adversary; but with all this he had a loveliness of temper which so endeared him to his friends that the survivors among them whom I have known never ceased the praise of the sweetness and gentleness of his familiar intercourse. It was natural to him to venerate greatness like Edmund Burke's; and a wound in his affections easily moved him to tears. If his life was dissolute, his speech was austere. His words were all pure English; he took no pains to hunt after them; the aptest came at his call, and seemed to belong to him. Every part of his discourse lived and

1776. Nov.

moved. He never gave up strength of statement for beauty of expression, and never stopped to fill up gaps with fine phrases. His healthy diction was unaffectedly simple and nervous, always effective, sometimes majestic and resounding, rarely ornate, and then only when he impressed a saying of poet or philosopher to tip his argument with fire. He never dazzled with brilliant colors, but could startle by boldness in the contrast of light and shade. He forced his hearers to be attentive and docile; for he spoke only when he had something to say that needed to be said, and compelled admiration because he made himself understood. He could not only take the vast compass of a great question, but with singular and unfailing sagacity could detect the principle upon which it hinged. What was entangled he could unfold quickly and lucidly; now speaking with copious fluency, and now unravelling point by point; at one time confining debate within the narrowest limits, and again discoursing as if inspired to plead for all mankind. He had a wonderful gift at finding and bringing together what he wanted, though lying far off and asunder. It was his wont to march straightforward to his end; but he knew how to step aside from an onset, to draw back with his eye on his foe, and then, by a quick reversion, to strike him unawares as with talons. When involved in dispute, he dashed at the central idea, which was of power to decide the strife; grasped it firmly and held it fast; turned it over and over on every side; held it up in the most various aspects; came once more to dwell upon it with fresh strength; renewed blow after blow till it became annealed like steel. He hit the nail again and again, and always on the head, till he drove it home into the minds of his hearers; and, when he was outvoted, he still bore away the wreath as a wrestler. His merits, as summed up by Mackintosh, were "reason, simplicity, and vehemence." 1776. Nov.

Yet Fox was great only as a speaker; nay, his sphere was still narrower; he was great only as a speaker in the house of commons, and there great only as a speaker in opposition. He was too skilful in controversy to be able



to present the connections and relations of events with the comprehensive fairness of an historian; and his strength went out from him when he undertook only to tell what had been done. He failed as a statesman from the waywardness of unfixed principles; but he was the very man to storm a stronghold. In running down a ministry, his voice hallooed on the pack, and he was sure to be the first in at the death. And now, in the house of commons, this master of debate had declared for the independence of the United States.

1776. Nov.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BORDER WAR IN THE NORTH AND IN THE SOUTH.

JULY—NOVEMBER, 1776.

ALL hopes of an early subjugation of "the rebels" were growing dim. Subordinates in Canada paid court to the "confidential circle" of Germain by echoing censures of Carleton, especially that he had chilled the zeal of the Indians by forbidding them to pass the boundary of his province. 1776. July to Sept.

Early in September, Hamilton, the lieutenant-governor of Detroit, wrote from his district directly to the secretary of state, promising that small parties "of the savages assembled" by him "in council," "chiefs and warriors from the Ottawas, Chippewas, Wyandots, and Potta- Sept. 16. watomies," with the Senecas, would "fall on the scattered settlers on the Ohio" and its branches; and he checked every impulse of mercy towards the Americans by saying that "their arrogance, disloyalty, and imprudence had justly drawn upon them this deplorable sort of war." The British people were guiltless of these outrages; it was Germain and his selected agents who hounded on the savages to scalp and massacre the settlers of the new country, enjoined with fretful restlessness the extension of the system along all the border from New York to Georgia, and chid every commander who showed signs of relenting.

In 1769, Carleton had urged the ministry to hold the line of communication between the St. Lawrence and New York, as the means of preventing a separation of the colonies; he now looked upon the office of recovering that line as reserved of right for himself. In the next year's campaign, he proposed to advance to Albany; for the present,

he designed only to acquire the mastery of Lake Champlain, and did not imagine that the government wished for more. In opposing him on these waters, the Americans were met by insuperable difficulties; their skilful ship-builders were elsewhere crowded with employment in fitting out public vessels and privateers; the scanty naval stores which could be spared had to be transported from tide-water to the lake, over almost impassable roads; and every stick of timber was to be cut in the adjacent woods. When determined zeal had constructed a fleet of eight gondolas, three row-galleys, and four sloops or schooners, there were no naval officers nor mariners nor gunners to take charge of them. The chief command fell on Arnold, a landsman; his second was Waterbury, a brigadier in the Connecticut militia; the crews were mostly soldiers.

1776. July to Sept. On the other hand, Carleton, who had received very exaggerated accounts of the American force on the lakes, retarded the campaign by an excess of preparation. He was aided by constructors from England, from the fleet in the St. Lawrence, and from the province of Quebec. The admiralty contributed naval equipments and materials for ship-building in abundance; it sent from the British yards three vessels of war, fully prepared for service, in the expectation that they could be dragged up the rapids of the Richelieu; two hundred or more flat-boats were built at Montreal and hauled to St. John's, whence a deep channel leads to the lake. The numerous army, composed in part of the men of Brunswick and of Waldeck, were most amply provided with artillery, and were flushed with confidence of easy victory. But while the vessels and transports were being built, or transferred to Lake Champlain, the troops for nearly three months were trained as sharpshooters; were exercised in charging upon imagined enemies in a wood; were taught to row. They became familiar with the manners of the savage warriors, of whom four hundred in canoes were to form their van on the lake; and they loved to watch the labors of the boat-builders. An attempt was made to drag the large vessels by land round the portage of the Richelieu; but it was given up, as too costly and too

slow, after they had been moved a hundred paces; and they were taken in pieces, to be reconstructed at St. John's. The work went forward with unexpected rapidity. The "Inflexible," which was three-masted and carried eighteen or twenty twelve-pounders and ten smaller guns, was rebuilt in twenty-eight days after its keel was laid. About seven hundred sailors, and the best young naval officers, were picked from the ships-of-war and transports to man and command the fleet.

Till October, Arnold roamed the lake without a check; on the fourth of that month, Carleton began his cautious advance; on the tenth, all his fleet was in motion. Arnold, whose judgment did not equal his courage, moored his squadron in the bay between Valcour Island and the main. This choice of a station met with the warm approval of General Gates; but one more absurd or more dangerous could not have been made, for it left the great channel of the lake undisputed to his enemies, who, on the morning of the eleventh, with a wind from the north-west, passed between Great and Valcour Islands, and came into his rear. They had much more than twice his weight of metal, twice as many fighting vessels, and skilled seamen and officers against landsmen. He awoke too late to the hopelessness of his position; but his audacity did not fail him; forming a line at anchor from Valcour to the main, he advanced in the schooner "Royal Savage," supported by his row-galleys. The wind favored him, while it kept off the "Inflexible," which was already to the south of him; but the "Carleton" was able to get into action, and was sustained by the artillery boats. Of these, one was sunk, though its men were saved; but the best seamanship and gunnery gained the advantage; the galleys were driven back; the "Royal Savage," crippled in its masts and rigging, fell to the leeward, and was stranded on Valcour Island, whence Arnold, with the crew, made his way to the "Congress." Meantime, the "Carleton," accompanied by the artillery-boats, had the daring to beat up against the breeze, till it came within musket-shot of the American line, when it opened fire from

1776. Oct. 4.
Oct. 10.
Oct. 11.

both sides. The "Congress," on which Arnold was obliged to act as gunner, was hurt in her main-mast and yards, was hulled twelve times, and hit seven times between wind and water; the gondola "New York" lost all her officers except her captain; in the "Washington," the first lieutenant was killed, the captain and master wounded, the main-mast shot through so that it became useless. A gondola was sunk. Of the British artillery-boats, one, or perhaps two, went down. The "Carleton," which, owing to the wind, could receive no succor, suffered severely; Dacres, its captain, fell senseless from a blow; Brown, a lieutenant of marines, lost an arm; but Pellew, a lad of nineteen, who succeeded to the command, carried on the fight, to prevent Arnold's escape. Just before dark, when sixty or more of the Americans and forty or more of the British had been killed or wounded, the artillery-boats, on the signal of recall, towed the "Carleton" out of the reach of shot. At eight in the evening, the British fleet anchored, having their left wing near the mainland, the right near Valcour Island, with several armed boats still further to the right, to guard the passage between Valcour and Great Island; and they were confident that at the dawn of the next day all the "rebel" vessels must be captured or destroyed. Arnold and his highest officers, Waterbury and Wigglesworth, saw no hope but in running the blockade. It was the night of the new moon, and the air was hazy; an hour or two before midnight, they had the dauntless hardihood to hoist anchor silently in the thick darkness; Wigglesworth, in the "Trumbull," led the retreat; the gondolas and small vessels followed; then came Waterbury, in the "Washington;" and, last of all, Arnold, in the "Congress;" and, having a fair wind, they stole unobserved through the British fleet, close to its left wing.

1776. Oct. 12. When day revealed their wonderful escape, Carleton could not restrain his anger. Advancing slowly against a southerly breeze, in the morning of the Oct. 13. thirteenth he caught sight of the fugitives near the Island of Four Winds; at half-past twelve he was near enough to begin a cannonade. Waterbury wished to

run his ship ashore; but Arnold hoped still for a chance to give battle. At half-past one the wind came suddenly out of the north, striking the British sails first; the "Washington" was overtaken near Split Rock, and compelled to strike; the "Congress," with four gondolas, keeping up a running fight of five hours, suffered great loss, and was chased into a small creek in Panton on the east side of the lake. To save them from his pursuers, Arnold set them on fire, with their colors flying. The last to go on shore, he formed their crews, and, in sight of the English ships, marched off in perfect order. His fame for courage rose higher than before, but at the cost of a fleet, which he recklessly sacrificed.

Carleton reproved his prisoners for engaging in the rebellion, found an excuse for them in the orders of the governor of Connecticut, whose official character the king still recognised, and dismissed them on their parole.

On the fourteenth, he landed at Crown Point. 1776. Oct. 14.
Master of the lake, he was within two hours' sail of Ticonderoga, which had for its garrison not more than three thousand effective men, with twenty-five hundred more at Mount Independence, the new post on the eastern side of Lake Champlain. Had he pushed forward and invested the place, it must have surrendered for want of provisions. But he never for a moment entertained such a design; to Riedesel, who joined him on the twenty- Oct. 22.
second, he announced his intention to take back the army into winter-quarters in Canada. Riedesel went near enough to Ticonderoga to see it from a hill, and was persuaded that it could easily be taken; but Carleton, who did not know that he was already superseded by Burgoyne, reserving that conquest for a glorious opening of his next campaign, waited only for tidings from Howe. News of the battle on Long Island reached him on the twenty-
seventh; and on the next day his army began its Oct. 27. Oct. 28.
return. On the third of November, his rear-guard Nov. 3.
abandoned Crown Point. Many British officers were astonished at his retreat, which seemed to the Americans a shameful and unaccountable flight. Three days later,

there was not one barrel of flour in Ticonderoga. The Connecticut militia soon returned home; the garri-
1776. Nov. 6. son, which was left by Gates under the command of Wayne, a gallant young colonel, consisted nominally of twenty-five hundred men; but the sick were very numerous, and perishing in misery; and all suffered for want of clothing. The term of the Pennsylvanians was to expire on the fifth of January; and they were unwilling to re-enlist before returning home.

July. No sooner had Moultrie and his brave garrison repulsed the attack on the south, than Lee at Charleston, in the utmost haste, used his undeserved glory to extort from congress an indemnity for the possible forfeiture of his property in England; and Rutledge, the president of the state to which he had seemingly rendered the greatest service, fearing his disgust, or some other ill consequence, consented to ask that "the enthusiast" might be gratified with thirty thousand dollars.

In July, Jonathan Bryan of Savannah, on the evening of his arrival at Charleston, persuaded Lee, to whom he was a stranger, that St. Augustine, and with it East Florida, could easily be taken. Without further reflection or inquiry, Lee, the next morning, announced to the continental troops on parade that he had planned for them a safe, sure, and remunerative expedition, of which the very large booty should all be their own. He called it a secret one, but let everybody know its destination. In the second
Aug. week of August, when the heavy dews, the heat, and exhalations from the rice-fields filled the air with death, he hastily marched off the Virginia and North Carolina troops, without one necessary article, without a field-piece, or even a medicine-chest. Howe, of North Carolina, and Moultrie soon followed; and about four hundred and sixty men of South Carolina, with two field-pieces, were sent to Savannah by water along the inland route. On the eighteenth, Lee reviewed his collective force and a Georgia battalion on the green at Yamacraw, and, in a few days, advanced the Virginia regiment and a part of the troops of South Carolina to Sunbury. There nearly all the officers,

even those from South Carolina, were seized by a violent fever, and fourteen or fifteen men were buried each day; especially, the noble battalion from the valley of Virginia, pining for the pure air of the Blue Ridge, was thinned by sickness and death. By this time, Lee sought to shift from himself to Moultrie the further conduct of the expedition; and Moultrie could only reply that there were no available resources which could render success possible. No enterprise during the war showed such want of judgment in its design, or of executive ability in its conduct. Early in September, congress called Lee to the north, to command in chief in case of mishap to Washington; he at once began the journey, taking with him all his continental force; but importunities at Charleston wrung from him leave for the North Carolina troops to stay behind. 1776. Sept.

At his departure he left a fearful contest raging in the mountains of the two Carolinas and Georgia. It was the fruit of the elaborately concerted plan to bring down upon defenceless frontiers an enemy whose manner of warfare was the indiscriminate murder of men, children, and women. The Cherokees heard with amazement that war raged between their father over the water and their elder brothers of the Carolinas, for a war between men speaking the same language was unknown to them; but Cameron and Stuart, British agents, well skilled in the methods of inflaming the savages, and having an almost unlimited credit on the British exchequer, swayed them by lavish largesses, the hopes of spoil, the promise of aid from a British army by way of Pensacola, and the desire of extending their hunting-grounds over wasted settlements. The settlers on the Watauga and the forks of the Holston had been tempted to adhere to the party of the crown; but, with few exceptions, the men of what is now Eastern Tennessee were faithful to the patriot cause. Twice they received warning from the Overhill Cherokees to remove from their habitations; but the messenger brought back a defiance, and threats from the district then called Fincastle county in Virginia. So stood the Cherokees, when a depu- July.

tation of thirteen or more Indians came to them from the Six Nations, the Shawnees and Delawares, the Mingoes, and the Ottawas. The moment, they said, was come to recover their lost lands. The Shawnees produced their war-tokens, of which the young Cherokee warriors laid hold, showing in return a war-hatchet received about six years before from the northern Indians. When the news of the arrival of Clinton and Cornwallis off Charleston reached the lower settlements of the Cherokees, they took up the war-club, and on each side of the mountains all their warriors, twenty-five hundred in number, prepared for deeds of blood. The Overhills collected a thousand skins for moccasons, and beat their maize into flour. A few whites were to go with them to invite all the king's men to join them; after which, they were to kill and drive all whom they could find. While Henry Stuart was seeking to engage the Choctaws and Chickasaws as allies, the Cherokees sent a message to the Creeks with the northern war-tokens; but that powerful nation stood in fear of the Americans, and returned for answer that "the Cherokees had plucked the thorn out of their foot, and were welcome to keep it." The rebuff came too late; at the news that the lower settlements had struck the borders of South Carolina, the war-song was everywhere sung; the wily warriors of all the western settlements fell upon the inhabitants of Eastern Tennessee, and roved as far as the cabins on Clinch River and the Wolf Hills, which we now call Abingdon. The common peril caused a general rising of the people of Eastern Tennessee and South-western Virginia, of North Carolina and the uplands of South Carolina. The Overhills received a check on the twentieth of July at the Island Flats, in what Haywood, the venerable historian of Tennessee, calls a "miracle of a battle," for not one white man was mortally wounded, while the Cherokees lost forty. The next day, a party was repulsed from Fort Watauga by James Robertson and his garrison of forty men. Colonel Christian, with Virginia levies, joined on their march by troops from North Carolina and Watauga, soon made themselves masters of the upper settlements on the Tellico and the Tennessee;

1776. July.

but, when the Cherokees sued for peace, the avenging party granted it, except that towns like Tuskega, where a captive boy had lately been burnt alive, were reduced to ashes.

The warriors of the lower settlements, who began the war, at daybreak on the first of July poured down upon the frontiers of South Carolina, killing and scalping all persons who fell into their power, without distinction of age or sex. The people had parted with their best rifles to the defenders of Charleston, and now flew for safety to stockade forts. The Indians were joined by the agent Cameron and a small band of white men, who crossed the mountains to promote a rising of the numerous loyalists in upper South Carolina. Eleven hundred men of that state, under the lead of Williamson, made head against the invaders, and, in August, destroyed the Cherokee towns on the Keowee and the Seneca and on one side of the Tugaloo, while a party of Georgians laid waste those on the other. Then, drawing nearer the region of precipices and waterfalls, which mark the eastern side of the Alleghanies, his army broke up the towns on the Whitewater, the Toxaway, the Estatoe, and in the beautiful valley of Jocassa, leaving not one to the east of the Oconee Mountain. The outcasts, who had so lately been engaged in scalping and murdering, fled to the Creeks, whose neutrality was respected. 1776. Aug.

In September, leaving a well-garrisoned fort on the Seneca, and marching up War Woman's Creek, Williamson passed through Rabun Gap, destroyed the towns on the Little Tennessee as far as the Unica Mountain, and then toiled over the dividing ridge into the Hiwassee valley, sparing or razing the towns at his will. There he was joined by Rutherford of North Carolina, who had promptly assembled in the district of Salisbury an army of more than two thousand men, crossed the Alleghanies at the Swannanoa Gap, forded the French Broad, and, by the trace which still bears his name, penetrated into the middle and valley towns, of which he laid waste six-and-thirty. "The Cherokees," wrote Germain, in November, to his trusty Sept.

agent, "must be supported, for they have declared for us; I expect with some impatience to hear from you of the success of your negotiation with the Creeks and Choctaws, and that you have prevailed on them to join the Cherokees. I cannot doubt of your being able, under such advantageous circumstances, to engage them in a general confederacy against the rebels in defence of those liberties of which they are so exceedingly jealous, and in the full enjoyment of which they have been always protected by the king." But the Choctaws never inclined to the war; the Chickasaws seasonably receded; the Creeks kept wisely at home; and dearly did the Cherokees aby their rising. Before Germain's letter was written, they were forced to beg for mercy. At a talk in Charleston, in February, 1777, the Man-killer said: "You have destroyed my homes, but it is not my eldest brother's fault; it is the fault of my
1776. father over the water;" and, at the peace in the following May, they gave up their lands as far as the watershed of the Oconee Mountain.

Nor was the overawing of the wild men the only good that came out of this bootless eagerness of the British minister to crush America by an Indian confederacy: henceforward, the settlers of Tennessee upheld American independence; and, putting all their feelings and their mind into one word, they named their district WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER X.

WHITE PLAINS.

October 1–28, 1776.

For nearly four weeks Washington and the main body of his army remained on the heights of Harlem. The uneven upland, little more than a half-mile wide and except at a few points less than two hundred feet above the sea, falls away precipitously towards the Hudson; along the Harlem River, it is bounded for more than two miles by walls of primitive rock or declivities steep as an escarpment. Towards Manhattanville, it ended in pathless crags. There existed no highway from the south, except the narrow one which, near the One hundred and forty-fourth Street, yet winds up Breakneck Hill. The approach from that quarter was guarded by three parallel lines, of which the first and weakest ran from about the One hundred and forty-eighth Street on the east to the One hundred and forty-fifth on the west; the second was in the rear, at the distance of two fifths of a mile: the third, one quarter of a mile still further to the north; so that they could be protected, one from another, by musketry as well as cannon. A little further than the third parallel, the house which Washington occupied stood on high ground overlooking the plains, the hills above Macgowan's Pass, the distant city, the bay, and its islands. 1776. Oct.

North of head-quarters, the land undulates for yet a mile, to where Mount Washington, its highest peak, rises two hundred and thirty-eight feet over the Hudson. The steep summit was crowned by a five-sided earthwork, mounting thirty-four cannon, but without casemates or strong outposts.

Just beyond Fort Washington the heights cleave asunder, and the road to Albany, by an easy descent, passes for about a mile through the rocky gorge. Laurel Hill, the highest cliff on the Harlem side, was occupied by a redoubt; the opposite hill, near the Hudson, known afterwards as Fort Tryon, was still more difficult of access. Thence both ridges fall abruptly to a valley which crosses the island from Tubby Hook. Beyond this pass, the land to King's Bridge on the right is a plain and marsh; on the left, a new but less lofty spur springs up, and runs to Spyt den Duyvel Creek, by which the Harlem joins the Hudson. This part of New York Island was defended by Fort Independence, on the high ridge north of Spyt den Duyvel; a series of redoubts guarded Fordham Heights, on the east bank of the Harlem; an earthwork was laid out above Williams's Bridge; and on the third of October a guard of riflemen had their alarm-post at the pass from Throg's Neck. Greene, who was fast gaining a name among the statesmen of New York as "beyond a doubt a first-rate military genius," and "in whose opinion Washington placed the utmost confidence," commanded a body in Jersey, at Fort Lee, on the summit of the palisades, where they were seventy-three feet higher than Fort Washington. The obstructing of the Hudson between Fort Lee and Fort Washington was intrusted to Putnam, who promised perfect success through an invention of his own.

1776. Oct.

If Howe could force the Hudson and get to the north of New York Island, the American army would be caged, and compelled to surrender or fight under the greatest disadvantage. Against this danger Washington was on his guard; but with the Hudson obstructed, with Greene above the palisades of Jersey, with Lee, who was looked for every day, in command on Fordham Heights, he would have awaited an attack from the south, for an assault from that quarter would not have menaced his communications. "If the enemy should not change their plan of operations," so he wrote to a friend, "and if the men will stand by me, which I despair of, I am resolved not to be forced from this ground while I have life."

During this suspense, many of the states were moulding the forms of their new governments, so as to fix in living institutions the thoughts of the American people on the freedom of conscience, the independence of religion, the legal equality of opinions, the safest guardianship of the principles of social order. How would the human race have suffered, had their experiments been suppressed!

A committee of the legislature of Massachusetts repaired to head-quarters, to obtain leave to enlist for one year only their quota of soldiers, who would nearly all be free-holders, or the sons of free-holders. But Washington dwelt on the necessity of a permanent force, capable of military discipline. When the committee of Massachusetts began to speak once more in favor of annual enlistments, Washington rose, and addressed them with an energy of manner which was long remembered: "Gentlemen! our cause is ruined if you engage men only for a year. If we hope for success, we must have men enlisted for the whole term of the war." 1776. Oct.

The army eagerly looked forward to the coming of Lee, not knowing that he had advised to give up the forts in Charleston harbor without firing a gun. He loomed as the evil genius of Clinton, whom he seemed to have faced at New York, in Virginia, and in North Carolina, and, with vastly inferior numbers, to have driven with shame from South Carolina. A New York officer wrote: "He is hourly expected, as if from heaven with a legion of flaming swordsmen." "His arrival," said Tilghman, the most faithful member of Washington's staff, "will greatly relieve our worthy general, who has too much for any mortal upon his hands." "Pray hasten his departure, he is much wanted," was the message of Jay to a friend in Philadelphia. Yet Lee, with all his ill-concealed aspirations, had not one talent of a commander. He never could see any thing in its whole, or devise a comprehensive plan of action, but, by the habit of his mind, would fasten upon some detail, and always find fault. Moreover, as an Englishman, he affected to look down upon his present associates, whom he thought to be "very bad company;" for he had the national pride

of his countrymen, though not their loyalty; the disdain of other nations, without devotedness to his own. His alienation from Britain grew out of petulance at being neglected; and, had a chance of favor been thrown to him, no one would have snapped more swiftly at the bait. He esteemed the people into whose service he had entered as unworthy of a place among the nations; their declaration of independence jarred on his feelings; and if, by fits, he played the part of a zealot in their cause, his mind, after every swing, came back to his first idea, that they had only to consider how they could, "with safety, glory, and advantage, return to their former state of relation." He used afterwards to say, that "things never would have gone so far, had his advice been taken;" and he reconciled himself to the declaration of independence by the Americans, only that they might have something "to cede" as the price of "accommodation."

1776. Oct.

On the seventh of October, Lee appeared before the continental congress in Philadelphia, and obtained the coveted grant of thirty thousand dollars as an indemnity against apprehended losses in England. Aware of his designation to the chief command in case of a vacancy, he looked upon himself as the head of a party, fretted more than ever at his subordinate position, and wearied congress with clamor for a separate army on the Delaware; but they persisted in sending him to the camp of Washington, while he in return secretly mocked at them as "a stable of cattle that stumbled at every step."

Lee had "advised that now was the time to make up with Great Britain," and had promised for that end to "use his influence with congress." On that question Pennsylvania was divided. At the same time, its convention, composed of new men, and guided mainly by a schoolmaster, the honest but inexperienced James Cannon, formed a constitution, under the complex influence of abstract truths and an angry quarrel with the supporters of the old charter of the colony. It extended the elective franchise to every resident tax-payer; while, with the approbation of Franklin, it concentrated legislative power in a single assembly.

Moreover, that assembly, in joint ballot with a council whose members were too few to be of much weight in a decision by numbers, was to select the president and vice-president. The president, who stood in the place of chief magistrate, had no higher functions than those of the president of a council-board. This constitution, which was a mortal offence to the old proprietary party and a stumbling-block to the men of wealth, and which satisfied neither the feelings nor the intuitions nor the reflective judgment of a numerical majority in the state, was put in action without being previously submitted to the citizens for ratification; and it provided no mode for its amendment but through the vote of two thirds of all persons elected to a board of censors, which was to be chosen for one year only in seven. It could have no place in the heart of the people, and was acceptable only as the badge of a revolution; yet from every elector, before his vote could be received, an oath or affirmation was required that he would neither directly nor indirectly do any thing injurious to it as established by the convention. This requirement, which disfranchised a large part of the inhabitants, especially of the Quakers, rent the state into embittered domestic factions. To the proprietary party, which had retained a majority in the regular colonial assembly, the new government was hateful as a usurpation; and to Robert Morris, Cadwalader, Rush, Wayne, and many others of "the best of the whigs," the uncontrolled will of a single legislative assembly, which might be biased by the delusions of selfishness or moved by fickle moods of passion, seemed a form of tyranny; while the want of executive energy took away all hope of employing the resources of the state with earnestness and unanimity. In the very presence of the continental congress, the spirit of a counter-revolution lurked among the inhabitants of Philadelphia; their lukewarm officers in the army threw up their commissions: William Allen, from disgust at the new system; Shee, the good disciplinarian, from an avowed want of fortitude; Reed, the adjutant-general, knowing full well "the most ruinous consequences" of resignations, and concealing his own from Washington. A majority would

1776. Oct.

have eagerly rushed into a negotiation with the Howes, had their powers been less confined; and there existed "a considerable party for absolute and unconditional submission," which derived aid from the scruples of the Quakers to bear arms, or to promise allegiance to the new constitution.

Aware of the wavering in Pennsylvania, Lee, on his way through New Jersey, found much that was congenial with his own inclination "to condemn the Americans for continuing the contest." The constitution of that state was self-annulled, "if a reconciliation between Great Britain and the colonies should take place;" the president of the body which framed it opposed independence to the last, and still leaned to a reunion with Britain; the highest officers in the public service were taken from those who had stood against the disruption; the assembly had adjourned on the eighth "through mere want of members to do business," leaving unfinished almost every thing which they should have done; the open country could not hope for success in resisting an invading army; "the tories, taking new life, in one of the largest counties were circulating papers for subscription," complaining of the declaration of independence, because it was a bar to a treaty. With the alleged concurrence of "the most active friends to the cause in New Jersey, and the other provinces he had passed through," Lee, from Princeton, seized this opportunity to propose that congress should authorize an offer to open a negotiation with Lord Howe on his own terms.

1776. Oct.

Washington at this time, "bereft of every peaceful moment, losing all comfort and happiness," and least of all thinking that any one could covet his office, was watching the effects of the wilfulness of congress in delaying to raise an army, seeing the impossibility of doing any essential service to the cause by continuing in command, and the inevitable ruin that would follow his retirement. "Such is my situation," said he, privately, "that if I were to wish the bitterest curse to an enemy on this side of the grave, I should put him in my stead with my feelings." Again he addressed congress: "Give me leave to say, your affairs are in a more unpromising way than you seem to appre-

hend; your army is on the eve of its dissolution. True it is, you have voted a larger one in lieu of it; but the season is late, and there is a material difference between voting battalions and raising men." But, with this warning in their hands, they were still confident of a respite from danger for the winter. "The British force is so divided, they will do no great matter more this fall," said John Adams, the chairman of the board of war; and though officially informed that the American army would disband, that all the measures thus far adopted for raising a new one were but fruitless experiments, he asked and obtained leave of absence at the time when there was the most need of energy to devise relief. On the morning of the eleventh, previous to his departure, news came, that, two days before, two British ships, of forty-four guns each, with three or four tenders, under an easy southerly breeze, ran through the impediments in the Hudson without the least difficulty, and captured or destroyed the four American row-galleys in the river. Congress would not conceive the necessity of further retreat; referring the letter to the board of war, they instantly "desired Washington, if practicable, by every art and at whatever expense, to obstruct effectually the navigation between the forts, as well to prevent the regress of the enemies' frigates lately gone up, as to hinder them from receiving succors." Greene shared this rash confidence. After the British ships-of-war had passed up the river, he said: "Our army are so strongly fortified, and so much out of the command of the shipping, we have little more to fear this campaign." Congress was confirmed in its delusion by Lee, who, on the twelfth, 1776. Oct. wrote from Amboy that Howe would not attack Washington's lines, but would "infallibly" proceed against Philadelphia; and he urged that Washington "should spare a part of his army to be stationed about Trenton."

While Lee was writing this opinion, Howe, leaving his finished lines above Macgowan's Pass to the care of three brigades under Percy, embarked the van of his army on the East River, and landed at Throg's Neck. Washington, who had foreseen this attempt to gain his rear, seasonably occu-

pied the causeway and bridge which led from Throg's Neck, by Hand's riflemen, a New York regiment, the regiment of Prescott of Pepperell, and an artillery company; posted guards on all the defensible grounds between the two armies; began the evacuation of New York Island by sending Macdougall's brigade before nightfall[1] four miles beyond King's Bridge; and detached a corps to White Plains, to which place he ordered his stores in Connecticut to be transferred. On the thirteenth, a council of war was called, but was adjourned, that Greene and Mercer might receive a summons and Lee be present. On the fourteenth, in obedience to the indiscreet order of congress, Putnam was charged "to attend particularly to the works about Mount Washington, and to increase the obstructions in the river as fast as possible;" while Lee, still in New Jersey, blamed Washington for not menacing to resign. Later in the day Lee crossed the river, and found New York Island already more than half evacuated. Riding in pursuit of Washington, who was directing in person the defence along East and West Chester, he was received with confidence, and assigned to the division beyond King's Bridge, with the request that he would exercise no command till he could make himself acquainted with the arrangements of his post.

1776. Oct.

In the following night, Mercer, at first accompanied by Greene, made a descent upon Staten Island, and at day-

[1] The origin of the retirement of the American army from New York has been most industriously misrepresented. "The movement originated with General Lee," writes Stedman, Hist. of the War, i. 211, and he is substantially followed by Reed's Reed, i. 251. So far is this from the truth, the movement was ordered before the idea had entered the mind of Lee, as appears from his letters of Oct. 12 and Oct. 14, and was more than half executed a day or two before his arrival. For evidence of the beginning of the movement, see Smallwood, Oct. 12, 1776, where he acknowledges the receipt of his orders on the very day the British landed, Force, ii. 1014; confirmed by Heath in his journal for the same day, Heath, 76; by Col. Ewing to Maryland Council of Safety, Oct. 13, 1776, in Force, ii. 1025; by J. Reed to his wife, Oct. 13, 1776, in Reed's Reed, i. 244: "The principal part of this army is moved off this island." These letters were all written before Lee arrived, and before he knew any thing about the movement.

break on the fifteenth he took seventeen prisoners at Richmond. The intended descent upon eastern Long Island was postponed.

To the council of war which assembled on the sixteenth Washington read accounts of a conspiracy of the numerous disaffected in West Chester and Duchess counties, and produced ample evidence of the intention of the enemy to surround his army; in reply to his question, all, except George Clinton, agreed that a change of position was necessary "to prevent the enemy cutting off the communication with the country." Lee, who came to the camp to persuade Washington that he was in no danger whatever of an attack, joined in the well-considered decision which the best of the generals had brought with them to the council, and distinguished himself by his vehement support of his newly adopted opinion.[1] The council also agreed, with apparent unanimity, that "Fort Washington be retained as long as possible." 1776. Oct.

After five days, which Howe passed on Throg's Neck in bringing up more brigades and collecting stores, he gave up the hope of getting directly in Washington's rear, and resolved to strike at White Plains. On the eighteenth, the British, crossing in boats to Pell's Neck, landed just below East Chester, at the mouth of Hutchinson River. Glover, with one brigade, engaged their advanced party in a short but sharp action, which was commended in general orders, and honored at Ticonderoga "with three cheers" from the northern army. That night the British lay upon their arms, with their left upon a creek towards East Chester, and their right near New Rochelle. In the march to White Plains the Americans had the advantage of the shortest distance, the greatest number of efficient troops, and the strongest ground. The river Bronx, a small stream of Westchester county, nearly parallel with the Hudson, scarcely thirty miles long, draining a very narrow valley, and almost everywhere fordable, ran through thick forests

[1] That Lee's opinion was new appears from his own letters. Gordon, in his account of the council, makes Greene figure largely; but Greene was not present at it, as the record shows. Force, ii. 1117.

along a succession of steep ridges. The hills to the north of White Plains continue to the lakes which are its sources, and join the higher range which bounds the basin of the Croton River. The Americans moved upon the west side, pressing the British towards the sound, taking care not to be outflanked, and protecting their march by a series of intrenched camps. Each party was deficient in the means of transportation; but the Americans, who were in fine spirits, themselves dragged their artillery, and carried what they could of their baggage on their backs.

1776. Oct.

Ever aware of the vigilance and activity of Washington, Howe manifested extreme caution; his march was close; his encampments compact. He was beset by difficulties in a "country so covered with forests, swamps, and creeks that it was not open in the least degree to be known but from post to post, or from the accounts of the inhabitants, who were entirely ignorant of military description." After halting two days for two regiments of light dragoons, on the twenty-first, leaving Von Heister with three brigades to occupy the former encampment, he advanced with the right and centre of his army two miles above New Rochelle. To counteract him, Washington transferred his head-quarters to Valentine's Hill, and put in motion Heath's division, which marched in the night to White Plains, and on the following day occupied the strong grounds north of the village, so as to protect the upper road from Connecticut. In the same night, Haslet of Delaware surprised a picket of Rogers's regiment of rangers, and brought off thirty-six prisoners, a pair of colors, and sixty muskets. A few hours later, Hand, with two hundred rifles, encountered an equal number of yagers, and drove them from the field. Howe felt the need of a greater force. On the twenty-second, the second division of the Hessians and the regiment of Waldeckers, who had arrived from a very long voyage only four days before, were landed by Knyphausen at New Rochelle, where they remained to protect the communications with New York. This released the three brigades with Von Heister; but, before they could move, Washington, on the morning of the twenty-third, installed his head-

quarters at White Plains, and thus baffled the plan of getting into his rear. On the twenty-fifth, Howe's army crossed the country from New Rochelle to the New York road, and encamped at Scarsdale with the Bronx in front, the right of his army being about four miles from White Plains. While he was waiting to be joined by Von Heister's division, Lee and the rear of the American army reached Washington's camp, without loss, except of sixty or seventy barrels of provisions. Here the querulous general indulged his habit of finding fault, selecting for blame the place of the encampment; but, though there was stronger ground in the rear, there was none so well suited to defend the stores; besides, it was Washington's object not to escape from Howe, but to draw him on and waste his time.

The twenty-seventh was marked by a combined movement against Fort Washington by the British who had been left at New York. A ship-of-war came up to cut off the communication across the river; while the troops under Percy, from Harlem plain, made a disposition for an attack; but Greene animated the defence by his presence; Magaw promptly manned his lines on the south; the vessel of war suffered so severely from two eighteen-pounders on the Jersey shore and one on the New York side, that she slipped her cable, left her anchor, and escaped by the aid of the tide and four tow-boats. Elated at the result, Greene sent to congress by express a glowing account of the day; "the troops," he said, "were in high spirits, and in every engagement, since the retreat from New York, had given the enemy a drubbing." Lasher, on the next day, obeyed orders sent from Washington's camp to quit Fort Independence, which was insulated and must have fallen before any considerable attack; but Greene, under the illusions of inexperience, complained of the evacuation as premature, and likely to damp the spirits of his troops, and wrote murmuringly to Washington, that the "fort might have kept the enemy at bay for several days." 1776. Oct. 27.

On the bright morning of the twenty-eighth, the army of Howe, expecting a battle which was to be Oct. 28.

the crisis of the war, advanced in two divisions, its right under Clinton, its left under Von Heister. At Hart's Corner they drove back a large party of Americans under Spencer. As their several columns came within three quarters of a mile of White Plains, Washington's army was seen in order of battle awaiting an attack on hilly ground of his own choice, defended by an abattis and two nearly parallel lines of intrenchments, his right flank and rear protected by a bend in the Bronx, his left resting on very broken ground too difficult to be assailed.

Howe was blamed for not having immediately stormed the American centre, which was the only vulnerable point. Washington had no misgivings; for his army, numbering rather more than thirteen thousand men against thirteen thousand, was in good spirits, confident in itself and in him. Howe considered that the chances of a repulse might be against him; that, should he carry one line, there would remain another; that, if he scaled both, "the rebel army could not be destroyed," because the ground in their rear was such as they could wish for securing a retreat, so that the hazard of an attack exceeded any advantage he could gain. But, as he had come so far, he seemed forced to do something. A corps of Americans, about fourteen hundred strong, under the command of Macdougall, occupied Chatterton Hill, west of the Bronx and less than a mile west-south-west of Washington's camp, and thus covered the road from Tarrytown to White Plains. Howe directed eight regiments, about four thousand men, to carry this position, while the rest of his army, with their left to the Bronx, seated themselves on the ground as lookers-on.

1776. Oct. 28.

A heavy but ineffective cannonade by the British across the Bronx was feebly returned by the three field-pieces of the Americans on the hill. The Hessian regiment Lossberg, supported by Leslie with the second English brigade and Donop with the Hessian grenadiers, forded the Bronx, and marched under cover of the hill, until by facing to the left their column became a line, parallel with that of the Americans, which was composed of the remains of the regi-

ments of Brooks of Massachusetts, Haslet of Delaware, Webb of Connecticut, Smallwood of Maryland, and one of New York. The cannonade ceased; and the British troops struggled through a deadly shower of bullets to climb the rocky hillside. For fifteen minutes they met with a most determined resistance, especially from the men of Maryland and Delaware. In the American camp it seemed that the British were worsted; but, just then Rall, who, acting from his own observation and judgment, had brought up two regiments by a more southerly and easier route, ordered his bugles to sound, and decided the day by suddenly charging the Americans on their flank. Macdougall, attacked in flank and front by thrice his own numbers, still preserved his communications, and conducted his party over the Bronx by the road and bridge to Washington's camp. Of stragglers only about eighty were taken. The loss of the Americans in killed and wounded was less than a hundred, while that of the English and Hessians was at least two hundred and twenty-nine. 1776. Oct. 28.

CHAPTER XI.

FORT WASHINGTON.

OCTOBER 29—NOVEMBER 16, 1776.

THE occupation of Chatterton Hill enfeebled Howe by dividing his forces; and he waited two days for four battalions from New York and two from New Rochelle. Washington employed the respite in removing his sick and his stores, strengthening his position, and throwing up strong works on higher grounds in his rear.

1776. Oct.

A drenching rain in the morning of the thirty-first was Howe's excuse for postponing the attack one day more; in the following night, Washington, perceiving that Howe had finished batteries and received re-enforcements, drew back his army to high ground above White Plains. There, at the distance of long cannon-shot, he was unapproachable in front; and he held the passes in his rear. His superiority as a general was manifest; but under the system of short enlistments his strength was wasting away. The militia would soon have a right to go home, and did not always wait for their discharge. To the several states was reserved the sole right to issue commissions; if this had been seasonably done, troops whose time was nearly at an end might have engaged again; "it was essential to keep up some shadow of an army," and for all that "not a single officer was yet commissioned to recruit."

Thus far Howe had but a poor tale to tell; he must do more, if he would not go in shame into winter quarters. Putnam, whose division had been the last to leave New York Island, had an overweening confidence in the impregnability of Fort Washington, which he had raised; on his parting request, Greene, whose command now extended to

that fort, had not scrupled to increase its garrison by sending over between two and three hundred men. The regiments which Washington had assigned to its defence were chiefly Pennsylvanians under the command of Colonel Magaw, who had passed from the bar of Philadelphia to the army.

On the last day of October, Greene, who was as blindly confident as Putnam, wrote to Washington for instructions; but, without waiting for them, he again re-enforced Magaw with the rifle regiment of Rawlings. On the second of November, Knyphausen left New Rochelle, and with his brigade took possession of the upper part of New York Island. On the fifth, Howe suddenly broke up his encampment in front of Washington's lines, and moved to Dobb's Ferry; the American council of war which was called on the sixth at White Plains agreed unanimously to throw troops into the Jerseys, but made no change in its former decision "to retain Fort Washington as long as possible." That decision rested on an order from congress; to that body, therefore, Washington, on the day of the council, explained the approaching dissolution of his own army, and "that the enemy would bend their force against Fort Washington, and invest it immediately." But congress left their former orders unchanged. "The gentry at Philadelphia loved fighting, and, in their passion for brilliant actions with raw troops, wished to see matters put to the hazard." Greene was possessed with the same infatuation; when, on the sixth, three vessels passed the obstructions in the Hudson, he wrote to Washington, "that they were prodigiously shattered from the fire of his cannon;" and at the same time, reporting that Rall had advanced with his column to Tubby Hook, he added: "They will not be able to penetrate any further."

1776. Nov. 2.

Nov. 5.

Nov. 6.

Washington saw more clearly. Cares of every sort overwhelmed him, but could not daunt his fortitude, nor impair his judgment. His first object was to save the garrison at Fort Washington and the stores at Fort Lee; and on the eighth he gave to Greene his final instructions,

Nov. 8.

overruling the order of congress with modesty yet with clearness: "The passage of the three vessels up the North River is so plain a proof of the inefficacy of all the obstructions thrown into it, that it will fully justify a change in the disposition. If we cannot prevent vessels from passing up, and the enemy are possessed of the surrounding country, what valuable purpose can it answer to attempt to hold a post from which the expected benefit cannot be had? I am, therefore, inclined to think that it will not be prudent to hazard the men and stores at Mount Washington; but, as you are on the spot, I leave it to you to give such orders, as to evacuating Mount Washington as you may judge best, and so far revoking the order given to Colonel Magaw to defend it to the last. So far as can be collected from the various sources of intelligence, the enemy must design a penetration into Jersey, and to fall down upon your post. You will, therefore, immediately have all the stores removed, which you do not deem necessary for your defence."

Having thus disposed of the question of Fort Washington by revoking the order to defend it to the last, and providing for its evacuation, and having ordered "immediate" preparations for evacuating Fort Lee, he turned
1776. Nov. 9. his mind to other duties. On the ninth, he began sending with Putnam to the Jerseys five thousand troops, of which he was himself to take the com-
Nov. 10. mand. On the tenth, Lee, who, with about seven thousand five hundred continental troops and militia, was to remain behind till all doubt respecting Howe's movements should be over, was warned, in written orders, to guard against surprises, and to transport all his baggage and stores to the northward of Croton River, with this final instruction: "If the enemy should remove the greater part of their force to the west side of Hudson's River, I have no doubt of your following, with all possible despatch." Then, having finished his work with a forecast that neglected nothing, Washington rode from White Plains an hour before noon, and reached Peekskill at sunset.

Nov. 11. On the morning of the eleventh, attended by Heath, Stirling, the two Clintons, Mifflin, and others,

he went in boats up the defile of the Highlands, past Forts Independence and Clinton and the unfinished Fort Montgomery, as far as the island on which Fort Constitution commanded the sudden bend in the river. A glance of the eye revealed the importance of the opposite west point, which it was now determined to fortify according to the wish of the New York provincial convention. Very early on the twelfth, Washington rode with Heath to reconnoitre the gorge of the Highlands; then giving him, under written instructions, the command of the posts on both sides of the river, with three thousand troops of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York to secure them, he crossed at ten o'clock, and rode through Smith's "clove" to Hackensack. His arrangements, as the events proved, were the very best that his circumstances permitted, and he might reasonably hope to check the progress of Howe in New Jersey at the river. But he was not seconded by his generals, who, from the character of the army and the uncertain extent of the power of the commander in chief, acted as if they were his peers. 1776. Nov. 12.

No sooner did Lee find himself in a separate command than he resolved neither to join nor to re-enforce his superior; and Greene framed his measures on a system directly contrary to Washington's intentions and orders. He fell to questioning the propriety of the directions which he received; insisted that Fort Washington should be kept, even with the certainty of its investment; gave assurance that the garrison was in no great conceivable danger, and could easily be brought off at any time; and cited Magaw's opinion, that the fort could stand a siege till December. Instead, therefore, of evacuating it, he took upon himself to send over re-enforcements, chiefly of Pennsylvanians, none from New England; left unrevoked the order to defend it to the last extremity; and, in a direct report to congress, counteracting the urgent remonstrances of his chief, he encouraged that body to believe that the attempt of Howe to possess himself of it would fail. Nov. 9-13.

Before the end of the thirteenth, Washington arrived at Fort Lee, and, to his great grief, found Nov. 13.

what Greene had done. "The importance of the Hudson River, and the sanguine wishes of all to prevent the enemy from possessing it," had induced congress to intervene by a special order, which left Washington no authority to evacuate Fort Washington, except in a case of necessity; his full council of war had approved the action of congress; Greene, his best and most trusted officer, and the commander of the post, insisted that the evacuation was not only uncalled for, but would be attended by disastrous consequences; and, under this advice, Washington hesitated, by an absolute order, to conflict with congress, whose judgment he might strive to enlighten, whose command he was bound to obey. His next hours at Hackensack were crowded with duties; besides ordinary matters of detail, he had to prepare from dissolving regiments the means of protecting New Jersey, and to advise congress of the pressing wants of the army.

1776. Nov. 14.

Nov. 15. On the night following the fourteenth, the vigilance of Greene so far slumbered, that thirty flat-boats of the British passed his post undiscovered, and hid themselves in Spyt den Duyvel Creek. Having finished batteries on Fordham Heights, Howe, in the afternoon of the fifteenth, summoned Magaw to surrender Fort Washington, on pain of the garrison's being put to the sword. The gallant officer, remonstrating against this inhuman menace, made answer, that he should defend his post to the last extremity, and sent a copy of his reply to Greene, who, about sunset, forwarded it to Washington, and himself soon after repaired to the island. On receiving the message, Washington rode to Fort Lee, and was crossing the river in a row-boat late at night, when he met Putnam and Greene, and spoke with them in the stream. Greene, who was persuaded that he had sent over "men enough to defend themselves against the whole British army," reported that the troops were in high spirits, and would do well. On this report Washington turned back with them to Fort Lee, for it was then too late to withdraw the garrison.

The grounds which Magaw was charged to defend reached

from the hills above Tubby Hook to a zigzag line a little south of the present Trinity cemetery, a distance north and south of two and a half miles, a circuit of six or seven. The defence of the northernmost point of the heights was committed to Rawlings and a Maryland rifle regiment, in which Otho Holland Williams was the second in command; Magaw retained at Fort Washington a small reserve; the lines at the south were intrusted to Pennsylvanians under Lambert Cadwalader of Philadelphia, who had no heart for the day's work, and justly enough thought and too openly avowed that a successful defence was impossible; on the Harlem side, Baxter, with one regiment from Bucks county, Pennsylvania, occupied the redoubt on Laurel Hill; the interval of two miles between him and Cadwalader was left to casual supplies of troops. 1776. Nov. 16.

A cannonade from the heights of Fordham was kept up on the sixteenth till about noon. Of four separate attacks, the most difficult and the most dangerous was made by Knyphausen with nearly four thousand five hundred men. The brigade on the right nearest the Hudson was led by Rall; the other, with Knyphausen, marched nearer the road towards the gorge, officers, like the men, on foot. The high and steep and thickly wooded land was defended by felled trees and three or four cannon. The assailants drew themselves up over rocks by grasping at trees and bushes; some slipped on the dry autumn leaves and fell; others dropped before the rifle. Excited by the obstinacy of the contest, Rall cried out: "Forwards, my grenadiers, every man of you!" His drums beat; his trumpeters blew the notes of command; from behind rocks and trees all who had escaped the fire shouted, "Hurrah!" and pushed forward without firing, till Hessians and Americans were mixed up together. The other German column was embarrassed by still closer thickets and a steeper hill side; but Knyphausen, tearing down fences with his own hand, and exposing himself like the common soldier, was but little behind Rall.

For the second attack a brigade under Lord Cornwallis embarked in flat-bottomed boats at King's Bridge on the stream, which is there very narrow; the fire of musketry on

the two foremost battalions was so heavy that the sailors slunk down in the boats, leaving it to the soldiers to handle the oars. When they had all landed, they climbed 1776. Nov. 16. "the very steep, uneven" Laurel Hill from the north, and stormed the American battery. Baxter fell while encouraging his men.

To the south, the division under Percy moved from what is now the One hundred and twenty-fifth Street. An advance picket of twenty men in a small redoubt was quickly dislodged by a brisk fire; but, after gaining the heights, Percy sheltered his greatly superior force behind a piece of woods, and remained idle for an hour and a half, while he sent word to Howe that he had carried an advanced work. To facilitate his success, Howe ordered three regiments to land in the rear of Cadwalader's lines. As they were seen coming down Harlem River, Magaw sent from Fort Washington, and Cadwalader from his lines, each about one hundred and fifty men to oppose them. Of this fourth attack, Colonel Sterling and the Highlanders led the way in boats through a galling fire; they landed under cover of a heavy cannonade from Fordham Heights, struggled up the steep path with a loss of ninety killed or wounded, and pressed forward across the island. To prevent being caught between two detachments, Cadwalader ordered his party to retreat; which they did, but in such confusion that they lost more than a hundred and fifty prisoners to Sterling, and the rest, instead of rallying on the grounds outside of the fort, huddled together within its narrow enclosure.

While this was going on, the Hessians at the north, clambering over felled trees and surmounting rocky heights, gained on the Americans, who in number were but as one to four or five. Rawlings and Otho Williams were wounded; the arms of the riflemen grew foul from use; as they retired, Rall with his brigade pushed upward and onward, and, when within a hundred paces of the fort, sent a captain of grenadiers with summons to the garrison to surrender as prisoners of war, all retaining their baggage, and the officers their swords. Cadwalader received and

favored the message; Magaw, to whom it was referred, asked five hours for consultation, but obtained only a half-hour. During the truce, a messenger from Washington, who was looking on from Fort Lee, brought him a letter, promising that if he would hold out for a few hours an effort should be made during the night to bring off the garrison. But the place could not have resisted an assault; and he surrendered to Knyphausen. The honors of the day belonged to the Hessians and the Highlanders; Rall and Sterling were distinguished in general orders; the fort took Knyphausen's name. "The glory acquired by Colonel Rall," said Edmund Burke, "has no charms for me; and I have not yet learned to delight in finding Fort Knyphausen in the heart of the British dominions." 1776. Nov. 16.

The killed and wounded of the German troops were more than three hundred and fifty, those of the whole royal army more than five hundred. The Americans lost in the field not above one hundred and forty-nine; but they gave up valuable artillery and some of their best arms, and the captives exceeded two thousand six hundred, of whom one half were well-trained soldiers. Greene, to whose rash disobedience of orders the disaster was due, would never assume his share of responsibility for it, and would never confess his glaring errors of judgment, but wrongfully ascribed the defeat to a panic which had struck the men, so that "they fell a prey to their own fears." The grief of Washington was sharpened by self-reproach for not having instantly, on his return from the inspection of the Highlands, overruled the opinion and countermanded the orders of the general officer to whom the post was intrusted, and who had better opportunities than himself of forming a judgment; but he took the teachings of adversity without imbibing its bitterness; he never excused himself before the world by throwing the blame on another; he never suffered his opinion of Greene to be confused; and he interpreted his orders to that officer as having given the largest discretion which their language could be strained to warrant.

CHAPTER XII.

WASHINGTON'S RETREAT THROUGH THE JERSEYS.

NOVEMBER 17—DECEMBER 13, 1776.

EARL CORNWALLIS, who, on the third day of February, 1766, had voted with Camden, Shelburne, and only two others, that the British parliament had no right to tax America, obtained the command in New Jersey. His first object was Fort Lee, which lay on the narrow ridge between the Hudson and Hackensack Rivers, and which was in the more danger as Greene, indulging his sanguine disposition, had disobeyed Washington's timely and clear order to prepare for its evacuation by the removal of its stores. Drop after drop of sorrow was fast falling
1776. Nov. 17. into the cup of Washington. On the seventeenth of November, the division under the command of Lee had orders to join; but the orders were treated as mere advice, and were wilfully slighted. The army was melting away; while congress showed signs of nervousness and felt their want of resources. To obtain troops, they granted the states liberty to enlist men for the war, or for three years; after their own long delay had destroyed every hope of good results from the experiment, they forwarded to Washington blank commissions, which he was to fill up, and conjured him to recruit the regiments then in camp.

Nov. 19. In the night of the nineteenth, two battalions of Hessian grenadiers, two companies of yagers, and the eight battalions of the English reserve, at least five thousand men, marched up the east side of the Hud-
Nov. 20. son, and the next morning, about daybreak, crossed with their artillery to Closter landing, five miles above Fort Lee. Greene had placed on the post neither

guard nor watch, being certain in his own mind that the British would not make their attack by that way; so that the nimble seamen were unmolested as they dragged the cannon for near half a mile up the narrow, steep, rocky road, to the top of the palisades. Aroused from his bed by the report of a countryman, Greene sent an express to the commander in chief, and, having ordered his troops under arms, took to flight with more than two thousand men, leaving blankets and baggage, except what his few wagons could bear away, more than three months' provision for three thousand men, camp-kettles on the fire, above four hundred tents standing, and all his cannon, except two twelve-pounders. With his utmost speed he barely escaped being cut off; but Washington, first ordering Grayson, his aide-de-camp, to renew the summons for Lee to cross the river, gained the bridge over the Hackensack by a rapid march, and covered the retreat of the garrison, so that less than ninety stragglers were taken prisoners. The main body of those who escaped were without tents, or blankets, or camp utensils, but such as they could pick up as they went along. While the Americans were in full retreat, Reed, the adjutant-general, ordered a horseman to hasten to Lee with an announcement of the day's disaster, and, as the means of writing gave out, to add this verbal message: "I pray you to push and join us;" and the horseman, without loss of time, fulfilled his commission.

Once more the army lay on a narrow peninsula, between the Hackensack and Passaic Rivers, which meet in Newark Bay. To avoid being hemmed in, while waiting for the junction of Lee, Washington gave orders on the twenty-first for moving beyond the Passaic; and on the same day he addressed a long and most earnest letter to Lee, explaining the necessity for insisting on his moving over by the easiest passage. Reed added a letter of his own. 1776. Nov. 21.

Halting on his march from Hackensack to Newark, from the bridge over the Passaic he reminded the governor of New Jersey that the enlistment of the flying camp belonging to that state, to Pennsylvania, and to Maryland, was

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to the New Jersey government "a perfect idea of the critical situation of affairs, the movements of the enemy, and the absolute necessity of further and immediate exertions," shrunk from further duty, and, eager definitively to quit the army, sent back his commission to the president of congress. But a cold rebuke from Washington, who had seen proof of his disingenuousness, drove him, at the end of four days, to retract his resignation, though he could not overcome his reluctance at "following the wretched remains of a broken army."

At Brunswick, where that army arrived on the evening of the twenty-eighth, it found short rest. Lee, though importuned daily, and sometimes twice a day, still lingered on the east of the Hudson; Pennsylvania had no government; the efforts of congress were as yet ineffective; and the appeal of the governor of New Jersey to its several colonels of militia could not bring into the field one full company. All this while Washington was forced to hide his weakness, and bear loads of censure from false estimates of his strength. To expressions of sympathy from William Livingston he answered: "I will not despair." As he wrote these words, on the last day of November, 1776. Nov. 30. he was parting with the New Jersey and Maryland brigades, which formed nearly half his force, and claimed their discharge, now that their engagement expired; while the brothers, Lord and Sir William Howe, were publishing a new proclamation of pardon and amnesty to all who would within sixty days promise not to take up arms in opposition to the king. The legislature of New Jersey did all it could; but the second officer of the Monmouth battalion refused "taking the oaths to the state;" Charles Read, its colonel, "submitted to the enemy;" the chief justice wavered; and Samuel Tucker, president of its constituent convention, chairman of its committee of safety, treasurer, and judge of its supreme court, yet signed the pledge of fidelity to the British. From Philadelphia, Joseph Galloway went over to Howe; so did Andrew Allen, who had been a member of the continental congress, and two of his brothers; all confident of being soon restored to

their former fortunes and political importance. Even John Dickinson discredited the continental paper, and for two or three months longer was so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of returning to the old state of dependence that he refused to accept from Delaware an appointment to the congress of the United States. The convention of Maryland voted its willingness to renounce the declaration of the fourth of July, for the sake of an accommodation with Great Britain.

On the other hand, Schuyler, always on the alert to send help where it was wanted, ordered from the northern army seven continental regiments of New England, whose term of service would expire on the first of January, to march to the Delaware. Wayne burned to come "to the assistance of poor Washington," but was kept a little longer in command at Ticonderoga. In the darkest hour, Trumbull, of Connecticut, professing a due dependence on the divine Disposer of events, said, for himself and for the people of his government: "We are determined to maintain our cause to the last extremity."

1776. Dec. The fate of America was trembling in the scale, when the Howes rashly divided their forces. Two English and two Hessian brigades, under the command of Clinton, assisted by Earl Percy and Prescott, passed through the sound in seventy transports, and, on the seventh of December, were convoyed into the harbor of Newport by Sir Peter Parker, with eleven ships-of-war. The island of Rhode Island could offer no resistance; the American armed vessels that were in the bay went up to Providence for shelter. For the defence of this useless conquest a large number of troops were kept unemployed all the next three years.

Dec. 1. On the first of December, just as Washington was leaving Brunswick, he renewed his urgency with Lee: "The enemy are advancing and mean to push for Philadelphia; the force I have with me is infinitely inferior in numbers, and such as cannot promise the least successful opposition. I must entreat you to hasten your march as [illegible] as possible, or your arrival may be too late." On the

evening of that day, Cornwallis entered Brunswick. Washington, as he retreated, broke down a part of the bridge over the Raritan; and a sharp cannonade took place across the river, in which it is remembered that an American battery was served by Alexander Hamilton. With but three thousand men, half clad, poorly fed, he marched by night to Princeton. Leaving Stirling and twelve hundred men at that place to watch the motions of the enemy, he went with the rest to Trenton. His mind derived nourishment from adversity, and grew more strong and serene and pure through affliction. He found time to counsel congress how to provide resources for the campaign of the next year; and, as he has himself written, he saw "without despondency even for a moment the hours which America styled her gloomy ones." Having transferred his baggage and stores beyond the Delaware, he faced about with such troops as were fit for service, to resist the further progress of the enemy, and to await the movements of Lee, whom he sought, by a special messenger, to animate to rapid movements. But, on the sixth, Cornwallis, who was impatient at his orders not to advance beyond Brunswick, was joined by Howe and nearly a full brigade of fresh troops. On his way to Princeton, Washington met the detachment of Stirling retreating before a vastly superior force; he therefore returned with his whole army to Trenton, and at that place crossed the Delaware. Who can tell what might have happened, if Howe had pushed forward four thousand men, by a forced march, in pursuit of the Americans? But, resting seventeen hours at Princeton, and, on the eighth, taking seven hours to march twelve miles, he arrived at Trenton just in time to see the last of the fugitives safely pass the river; and he could not continue the pursuit for want of means of transportation. The next morning, Cornwallis, who with the rear division had halted at Maidenhead, marched thirteen miles up the Delaware, as far as Coryell's ferry; but Washington had destroyed or secured every boat on that river and its tributary streams for a distance of seventy miles.

1776. Dec. 2.

Dec. 6.

Dec. 8.

Dec. 9.

1776. Dec. 10. Philadelphia was in danger. On the tenth of December, congress sent Mifflin through the counties of Pennsylvania to rouse its freemen to arms; it requested of the assembly that a committee of their body might accompany him in his tour; it directed Putnam to throw up works for the protection of the city; it invited the council of safety to call forth all the inhabitants to take part in their construction; and it published an earnest appeal to the people in general, but especially of Pennsylvania and the adjacent states, to make at least a short resistance, for it had already received aid from foreign states and the most positive assurances of further aid, and General Lee was advancing with a strong re-enforcement. On the same day, Washington, suffering anguish even to tears at the desolation of New Jersey, again addressed Lee: "I request and entreat you, and this too by the advice of all the general officers with me, to march and join me with your whole force with all possible expedition. Do come on; your arrival, without delay, may be the means of preserving a city." Late at night arrived an evasive letter from Lee; and Washington appealed to him once Dec. 11. more on the eleventh: "The force I have is weak, and entirely incompetent to prevent General Howe from possessing Philadelphia; I must therefore entreat you to push on with every possible succor you can bring." But this adjuration never reached him.

Nov. 10. The reputation of Lee was at its zenith, when he was left in command on the east side of the Hudson. In congress and among the people, his name was the mythical symbol of ability, decision, knowledge of war, and success; but in truth he was a man of a treacherous nature, a wayward will, and an unsoundness of judgment which bordered on morbidness. He began by ordering from the military chest a payment which was expressly forbidden by law; so that the paymaster was forced for self-protection to leave his neighborhood. At the fall of Fort Washington, his wild ambition blazed up without restraint; disregarding his orders to move his army, he spread in congress the false rumor that his last words to the general had been: "Draw

off the garrison, or they will be lost;" and he aspired to a grant of supreme power. "Your apathy," so he wrote to Rush, "amazes me; you make me mad. Let me talk vainly; had I the powers, I could do you much good, might I but dictate one week. Did none of the congress ever read the Roman history?" The day after the loss of Fort Lee, he received through Grayson an explicit order, and through Reed a peremptory one, to pass into New Jersey; determined on disobedience, in a letter to Bowdoin, who was then at the head of the government of Massachusetts, he railed about the "cursed job of Fort Washington," and explained his purpose: "The two armies, that on the east and that on the west side of the North River, must rest each on its own bottom; to harbor the thought of re-enforcing from one side to the other is absolute insanity." This he wrote with the knowledge that five thousand British troops had landed in New Jersey on the preceding day, and that there remained no danger on the east of the Hudson. To Washington he only made answer, that he had desired Heath to detach two thousand men to his relief; his own army could not get over in time to answer any purpose.

On the twenty-third of November, he received most elaborate instructions, written by Washington himself two days before, accompanied by a private letter from Reed. Washington's letter he at once garbled so as to convey false impressions, and sent the disconnected passages to Bowdoin with the message: "Affairs appear in so important a crisis, that I think even the resolves of the congress must no longer nicely weigh with us. We must save the community, in spite of the ordinances of the legislature. There are times when we must commit treason against the laws of the state for the salvation of the state. The present crisis demands this brave, virtuous kind of treason. For my own part (and I flatter myself my way of thinking is congenial with that of Mr. Bowdoin), I will stake my head and reputation on the propriety of the measure." His answer to Washington, which he kept back for two days, announced but little beyond his intention to stay where he was for two days more. The letter from Reed, who was

1776. Nov. 23.

habitually irresolute, and who was now too desponding to discriminate between the fortitude of Washington and the fickleness of Lee, ran thus: "You have decision, a quality often wanted in minds otherwise valuable. Oh, General, an indecisive mind is one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall an army; how often have I lamented it this campaign! All circumstances considered, we are in a very awful and alarming situation; one that requires the utmost wisdom and firmness of mind. If congress will not, or cannot, bend their whole attention to the plan of the new army, I fear all our exertions will be in vain in this part of the world." Lee greedily inhaled the flattery of the man who professed to be the bosom friend of Washington, and 1776. Nov. 24. on the twenty-fourth wrote back: "My dear Reed, I lament with you that fatal indecision of mind which in war is a much greater disqualification than stupidity, or even want of personal courage; accident may put a decisive blunder in the right, but eternal defeat and miscarriage must attend the man of the best parts, if cursed with indecision." Before the end of the month, this echo to Reed's letter, having outwardly the form of an official despatch, fell under the eye of Washington.

The daily and precise letters and mandates of Washington admitted no subterfuge. On the twenty- Nov. 26. sixth Lee promised obedience; he then turned to chide Heath for having thwarted his purpose, and wound up his note with these words: "The commander in chief is now separated from us; I, of course, command on this side the water; for the future, I will and must be obeyed." Assuming the air of authority in chief, he sent letters to three New England colonies, proposing a temporary embargo, that the privateersmen might be driven to seek employment in the army. And again to Massachusetts he urged the annual drafting of every seventh man; adding, to a Puritan colony, his "most fervent prayer that God Almighty may assist in this pious work." Congress had lost much of its purity and dignity by the transfer of many of its ablest members; yet as nothing encouraged him to expect the dictatorship from that body, or from

Massachusetts advice to save the country by "virtuous treason," or from his division a willing complicity in disobedience, he consented to cross the river; but he was still determined to avoid a junction with the commander in chief, and to impress into his own separate army all the forces which he could intercept. To Washington's mild reproaches for his delays, he answered on the thirtieth from Peekskill: "I shall explain my difficulties, when we both have leisure." Of Heath he demanded the transfer of his best regiments. The honest officer refused, producing his instructions. Lee insisted; assumed command at the post, and issued his own orders; but soon recalled them; for none approved his overturning the careful disposition which had been made for the security of the Highlands. 1776. Nov. 30.

On the second and third of December his division passed the ferry; but he claimed to be a "detached general," bound only "to make an important diversion." At Haverstraw, on the fourth, at the time when the army which he should have joined had shrunk to less than three thousand men, he heard of the approach of some of the seven regiments which Schuyler had transferred from the northern army; and he wrote to Washington: "I shall put myself at their head to-morrow; we shall compose an army of five thousand good troops," giving an exaggerated return of his numbers. From Pompton, on the seventh, he sent Malmedy, a French officer of no merit, and utterly ignorant of English, to assume the general command of the troops collected for the defence of Rhode Island; and in his letter to the governor of that state he sneered at Washington as neither "a heaven-born genius," nor one who had "theory joined to practice," and therefore destitute of the qualities which could "alone constitute a general." On the eighth, from Morristown, while the general was retiring before Howe and Cornwallis, and escaping beyond the Delaware with his half-starved, half-clad soldiers, few and weak and worn and seemingly doomed, Lee announced to Richard Henry Lee and Rush, the committee of congress, that it was Dec. 2, 3. Dec. 4. Dec. 7. Dec. 8.

not his intention "to join the army with Washington," because, said he, "I am assured he is very strong." This he penned with an unbounded audacity of falsehood, having at the moment the messenger from head-quarters at his side. To Washington, who had hoped by concert with him to achieve some great success, he used the same plain language of disobedience, and wrote that he would "hang on the enemy's rear, and annoy them in a desultory war." Then, as if to make the grief for his delay more poignant, he reports his division as amounting to four thousand noble-spirited men. "On receiving my despatches by Major Hoops," wrote Washington to congress, "I should suppose he would be convinced of the necessity of his proceeding this way with all the force he can bring." Lee had received those despatches, and, still adhering to his plan of remaining in the enemy's rear, had answered in a letter which, with the exception of a deceitful memorandum without signature, was his last communication to his chief during the campaign: "I shall look about me to-morrow, and inform you further." From Chatham, which he selected as his post, he on that morrow hurried off orders to Heath to have three regiments just arrived from Ticonderoga join him without loss of time, saying: "I am in hopes here to reconquer the Jerseys; it was really in the hands of the enemy before my arrival."

1776. Dec. 9.

On the twelfth his division marched with Sullivan eight miles only to Vealtown; but Lee, with a small guard, proceeded on the flank, three or four miles nearer the enemy, who were but eighteen miles off; and passed the night at White's tavern at Baskingridge. The next morning he lay in bed till eight o'clock. On rising, he wasted two hours with Wilkinson, a messenger from Gates, in boasting of his own prowess, and cavilling at every thing done by others. Never was a general in a position more free from difficulties; he had only to obey an explicit order from his superior officer, which there was nothing to prevent but his own caprices. It was ten o'clock before he sat down to breakfast; after which he took time, in a letter to Gates, to indulge his spleen towards

Dec. 12.

Dec. 13.

Washington in this wise: "My dear Gates, — The ingenious manœuvre of Fort Washington has unhinged the goodly fabric we had been building. There never 1776. Dec. 13. was so damned a stroke. *Entre nous*, a certain great man is most damnably deficient. He has thrown me into a situation where I have my choice of difficulties: if I stay in this province, I risk myself and army; and, if I do not stay, the province is lost for ever. I have neither guides, cavalry, medicines, money, shoes, or stockings. I must act with the greatest circumspection. Tories are in my front, rear, and on my flanks; the mass of the people is strangely contaminated; in short, unless something which I do not expect turns up, we are lost. Our counsels have been weak to the last degree. As to yourself, if you think you can be in time to aid the general, I would have you by all means go; you will at least save your army. It is said that the whigs are determined to set fire to Philadelphia; if they strike this decisive stroke, the day will be our own; but, unless it is done, all chance of liberty in any part of the globe is for ever vanished. Adieu, my dear friend; God bless you. Charles Lee." The paper, which he signed, was not yet folded, when Wilkinson, at the window, cried out: "Here are the British cavalry!" "Where?" asked Lee.

The young Lieutenant-colonel Harcourt had asked and obtained of Cornwallis the command of a scouting party of thirty dragoons; and, learning on the way Lee's foolhardy choice of lodgings, he approached the house undiscovered, and surrounded it by a sudden charge. Had Lee followed the advice of De Virnejoux, a gallant French captain in the American service, who was in the house, he would have escaped. But Harcourt, who knew that, to succeed, his work must he done quickly, called out to Lee to come forth immediately, or the house would be set on fire; and, within two minutes, he who had made it his habitual boast that he would never be taken alive sneaked out unarmed, bareheaded, without cloak, in slippers and blanket-coat, his collar open, his shirt very much soiled from several days' wear, pale from fear, with the abject manner of a coward, and

entreated the dragoons to spare his life. They seized him just as he was, and set him on Wilkinson's horse, which stood ready saddled at the door. One of his aids, who came out with him, was mounted behind Harcourt's servant; and at the signal by the trumpet, just four minutes from the time of surrounding the house, they began their return. On the way, Lee recovered from his panic, and ranted violently about his having for a moment obtained the supreme command, giving many signs of wildness and of a mind not perfectly right. At Princeton, when he was brought in, he was denied the use of materials for writing;[1] and an officer and two guards were placed in his room. He demanded to be received under the November proc-
1776. Dec. 13. lamation of the Howes; and on being refused its benefits, and reminded that he might be tried as a deserter, he flew into an extravagant rage, and railed at the faithlessness and treachery of the Americans as the cause of his mishap.

No hope remained to the United States but in Washington. His retreat of ninety miles through the Jerseys, protracted for eighteen or nineteen days, in an inclement season, often in sight and within cannon-shot of his enemies, his rear pulling down bridges, and their van building them up, had no principal purpose but to effect delay, till midwinter and impassable roads should offer their protection. The actors, looking back upon the crowded disasters which overwhelmingly fell on them, knew not how they got through, or by what springs of animation they were sustained. The virtues of their leader touched the sympathies of officers and men; they bore each other up with perseverance, as if conscious that, few and wasted as they were, they were yet to save their country.

[1] The letter, without date of time or place, and purporting to be from General Lee to Captain Kennedy, is not genuine, as all external and internal evidence proves.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRENTON.

DECEMBER 11–26, 1776.

THE British posts on the eastern side of the Delaware drew near to Philadelphia; rumor reported ships-of-war in the bay; the wives and children of the inhabitants were escaping with their papers and property; and the contagion of panic broke out in congress. On the eleventh of December they called on the states to 1776. Dec. 11. appoint, each for itself, a day of fasting and humiliation; and, with a feverish pretension to courage, they resolved that "Washington should contradict, in general orders, the false and malicious report that they were about to disperse, or adjourn from Philadelphia, unless the last necessity should direct it." He declined publishing the vote, and wisely; for, on the twelfth, after advice Dec. 12. from Putnam and Mifflin, they voted to adjourn to Baltimore, throwing upon the commander in chief the responsibility of directing all things relative to the operations of war. It is on record that Samuel Adams, whom Jefferson has described as "exceeded by no man in congress for depth of purpose, zeal, and sagacity," mastered by enthusiasm and excitement, which grew with adversity, resisted the proposition of removal. His speech has not been preserved, but its purport may be read in his letters of the time: "I do not regret the part I have taken in a cause so just and interesting to mankind. The people of Pennsylvania and the Jerseys seem determined to give it up, but I trust that my dear New England will maintain it at the expense of every thing dear to them in this

life; they know how to prize their liberties. May Heaven bless them. If this city should be surrendered, I should by no means despair." "Britain will strain every nerve to subjugate America next year; she will call wicked men and devils to her aid. Our affairs abroad wear a promising aspect; but I conjure you not to depend too much upon foreign aid. Let America exert her own strength. Let her depend on God's blessing, and he who cannot be indifferent to her righteous cause will even work miracles, if necessary, to carry her through this glorious conflict, and establish her feet upon a rock."

As a military precaution, Putnam ordered "the inhabitants of the city not to appear in the streets after ten o'clock at night." He promised in no event to burn the city which he was charged to defend to the last extremity, and would not allow any one to remain an idle spectator of the contest, "persons under conscientious scruples alone excepted." But the Quakers did not remain neutral. Indirectly disfranchised by the new form of government, they yearned for their old connection with England; at their meeting held at Philadelphia for Pennsylvania and New Jersey, they refused "in person or by other assistance to join in carrying on the war;" and with fond regret they recalled to mind "the happy constitution" under which "they and others had long enjoyed peace." The needless flight of congress, which took place amidst the jeers of tories and the maledictions of patriots, gave a stab to public credit, and fostered a general disposition to refuse continental money. At his home near the sea, John Adams was as stout of heart as ever. The conflict thus far had been less severe than he from the first had expected; though greater disappointments should be met, though France should hold back, though Philadelphia should fall, "I," said he, "do not doubt of ultimate success."

Confident that the American troops would melt away at the approaching expiration of their engagements, 1776. Dec. 13. Howe on the thirteenth prepared to return to his winter quarters in New York, leaving Donop as acting brigadier, with two Hessian brigades, the yagers, and

the forty-second Highlanders, to hold the line from Trenton to Burlington. At Princeton, he refused to see Lee, who was held as a deserter from the British army, 1776. Dec. 14. and was taken under a close guard to Brunswick and afterwards to New York. Cornwallis left Grant in command in New Jersey, and was hastening to embark for England. By orders committed to Donop, the inhabitants who in bands or separately should fire upon any of the army were to be hanged upon the nearest tree without further process. All provisions which exceeded the wants of an ordinary family were to be seized alike from whig or tory. Life and property were at the mercy of foreign hirelings. There were examples where English soldiers forced women to suffer what was worse than death, and on one occasion pursued girls, still children in years, who had fled to the woods. The attempts to restrain the Hessians were given up, under the apology that the habit of plunder prevented desertions. A British officer reports officially: "They were led to believe, before they left Hesse-Cassel, that they were to come to America to establish their private fortunes, and hitherto they have certainly acted with that principle."

It was the opinion of Donop that Trenton should be protected on the flanks by garrisoned redoubts; but Rall, who, as a reward for his brilliant services, through the interposition of Grant obtained the separate command of that post, with fifty yagers, twenty dragoons, and the whole of his own brigade, would not heed the suggestion. Renewing his advice at parting, on the morning of the fourteenth, Donop marched out with his brigade to find quarters chiefly at Bordentown, and Blackhorse, till Burlington, which lies low, should be protected from the American row-galleys by heavy cannon. On the sixteenth, it was Dec. 16. rumored that Washington with a large force hovered on the right flank of Rall; but, in answer to Donop's reports of that day and the next, Grant wrote: "I am certain the rebels no longer have any strong corps on this side of the river; the story of Washington's crossing the Delaware at this season of the year is not to be believed." "Let them come," said Rall; "what need of intrench-

ments? We will at them with the bayonet." At all alarms he set troops in motion, but not from apprehension; for he laughed the mouldering army of the rebels to scorn. His delight was in martial music; and for him the hautboys at the main guard could never play too long. He was constant at parade; and, on the relief of the sentries and of the pickets, all officers and under-officers were obliged to appear at his quarters, to give an aspect of great importance to his command. Cannon, which should have been in position for defence, stood in front of his door, and every day were escorted for show through the town. He was not seen in the morning until nine, or even ten or eleven; for every night he indulged himself in late carousals. So passed his twelve days of command at Trenton; and they were the proudest and happiest of his life.

"No man was ever overwhelmed by greater difficulties, or had less means to extricate himself from them," than Washington; but the sharp tribulation which assayed his fortitude carried with it a divine and animating virtue. Hope and zeal illuminated his grief. His emotions come to us across the century like strains from that eternity which repairs all losses and rights all wrongs; in his untold sorrows, his trust in Providence kept up in his heart an undersong of wonderful sweetness. The spirit of the Most High dwells among the afflicted, rather than the prosperous; and he who has never broken his bread in tears knows not the heavenly powers. We know from Washington himself that in all this period of trials and darkness, as he wrought out his country's salvation, the light of hope which was within never went out.

1776. Dec. 14. On the fourteenth of December, believing that Howe was on his way to New York, he resolved "to attempt a stroke upon the forces of the enemy, who lay a good deal scattered, and to all appearance in a state of security," as soon as he could be joined by the troops under Lee.[1] Meantime, he obtained exact accounts of New Jersey

[1] When any thing in the campaign went ill, there were never wanting persons to cast the blame on Washington; and there was always some pretender to the merit of what he did well. Washington, on his retreat

and its best military positions, from opposite Philadelphia to the hills at Morristown. Every boat was secured far up the little streams that flow to the Delaware; and his forces, increased by fifteen hundred volunteers from Philadelphia, guarded the crossing-places from the falls at Trenton to below Bristol. He made every exertion to threaten the

from Princeton, formed the fixed design to turn upon the British as soon as he should be joined by Lee's division. "I shall face about and govern myself by the movements of General Lee," wrote Washington, Dec. 5, to congress. Sparks's Washington, iv. 202. Dec. 12, to Trumbull, Force, iii. 1186: "to turn upon the enemy and recover most of the ground they had gained." He shadowed out his purpose more definitely as soon as it was known that Howe had left Trenton. Dec. 14, to Trumbull, Washington, iv. 220: "a stroke upon the forces of the enemy, who lie a good deal scattered." The like to Gates, Dec. 14, in Force, iii. 1216. On the 26th, Robert Morris wrote of the attack on Trenton: "This manœuvre of the general had been determined on some days ago, but he kept it secret as the nature of the service would admit." How many days he does not specify; but, Dec. 18, Marshall, a leading and well-informed patriot in Philadelphia, enters in his accurate diary, p. 122: "Our army intend to cross at Trenton into the Jerseys." A letter of the 19th, in Force, iii. 1295, says: "before one week." On the same 19th, Greene writes of Washington's purpose "to give the enemy a stroke in a few days." Force, iii. 1342. On the 20th, Washington writes: "The present exigency will not admit of delay in the field." On the 21st, Robert Morris writes to Washington: "I have been told to-day that you are preparing to cross into the Jerseys. I hope it may be true; . . . nothing would give me greater pleasure than to hear of such occurrences as your exalted merit deserves." Force, iii. 1331. On the same 21st, Robert Morris, by letter, communicated the design to the American commissioners in France, as a matter certainly resolved upon. Force, iii. 1333. The Donop journal, in reporting the information which was furnished by General Grant's spy, appears to me to have reported nothing but what happened before any letter of the twenty-second could have been considered. The elaborate letter of Reed to Washington, Dec. 22, 1776, proves that Reed was not in the secret. As adjutant-general, his place was at Washington's side, if he was eager for action. Lord Bacon says: "Letters are good, when it may serve afterwards for a man's justification to produce his own letter." In 1782 Reed wished to produce this letter for his justification; and somehow or other garbled extracts from it found their way into Gordon, ii. 391, and into Wilkinson, i. 124, with a letter from Washington to Reed. Washington nowhere gives Reed credit for aid in the plan or execution of the affair at Trenton; nor does any one else who was concerned in the preparations for that action.

Hessians on both flanks by militia, at Morristown on the north, and on the south at Mount Holly.

The days of waiting he employed in presenting congress with a plan for an additional number of battalions, to be raised and officered directly by the United States without the intervention of the several states; thus taking the first great step towards a real unity of government. On the twelfth he had written: "Perhaps congress have some hope and prospect of re-enforcements. I have no intelligence of the sort, and wish to be informed on the subject. Our little handful is daily decreasing by sickness and other causes; and, without considerable exertions on the part of the people, what can we reasonably look for? The subject is disagreeable; but yet it is true." On the sixteenth he continued: "I am more and more convinced of the necessity of raising more battalions for the new army than what have been voted. The enemy will leave nothing unessayed in the next campaign; and fatal experience has given its sanction to the truth, that the militia are not to be depended upon but in cases of the most pressing emergency. Let us have an army competent to every exigency." On the twentieth he grew more urgent: "I have waited with much impatience to know the determination of congress on the propositions made in October last for augmenting our corps of artillery. The time is come when it cannot be delayed without the greatest injury to the safety of these states; and therefore, under the resolution of congress bearing date the twelfth instant, by the pressing advice of all the general officers now here, I have ventured to order three battalions of artillery to be immediately recruited. This may appear to congress premature and unwarrantable; but the present exigency of our affairs will not admit of delay, either in the council or the field. Ten days more will put an end to the existence of this army. If, therefore, in the short interval in which we have to make these arduous preparations, every matter that in its nature is self-evident is to be referred to congress, at the distance of a hundred and thirty or forty miles, so much time must elapse as to defeat the end in view.

1776. Dec. 16.

Dec. 20.

"It may be said that this is an application for powers too dangerous to be intrusted; I can only say, that desperate diseases require desperate remedies. I have no lust after power; I wish with as much fervency as any man upon this wide extended continent for an opportunity of turning the sword into the ploughshare; but my feelings as an officer and as a man have been such as to force me to say, that no person ever had a greater choice of difficulties to contend with than I have. It is needless to add, that short enlistments, and a mistaken dependence upon militia, have been the origin of all our misfortunes, and of the great accumulation of our debt. The enemy are daily gathering strength from the disaffected. This strength will increase, unless means can be devised to check effectually the progress of his arms. Militia may possibly do it for a little while; but in a little while, also, the militia of those states which have been frequently called upon will not turn out at all; or, if they do, it will be with so much reluctance and sloth as to amount to the same thing. Instance New Jersey! Witness Pennsylvania! The militia come in, you cannot tell how; go, you cannot tell when; and act, you cannot tell where; consume your provisions, exhaust your stores, and leave you at last at a critical moment.

"These are the men I am to depend upon ten days hence; this is the basis on which your cause must for ever depend, till you get a standing army, sufficient of itself to oppose the enemy. This is not a time to stand upon expense. If any good officers will offer to raise men upon continental pay and establishment in this quarter, I shall encourage them to do so, and regiment them, when they have done it. If congress disapprove of this proceeding, they will please to signify it, as I mean it for the best. It may be thought I am going a good deal out of the line of my duty, to adopt these measures, or to advise thus freely. A character to lose, an estate to forfeit, the inestimable blessings of liberty at stake, and a life devoted, must be my excuse."

On the twenty-fourth he resumed his warnings: 1776. Dec. 24.
"Very few have enlisted again, not more from an

aversion to the service than from the non-appointment of officers in some instances, the turning out of good and appointing of bad in others; the last of this month I shall be left with from fourteen to fifteen hundred effective men in the whole. This handful, and such militia as may choose to join me, will then compose our army. When I reflect upon these things, they fill me with concern. To guard against General Howe's designs, and the execution of them, shall employ my every exertion; but how is this to be done?

"The obstacles which have arisen to the raising of the new army from the mode of appointing officers induce me to hope that, if congress resolve on an additional number of battalions to those already voted, they will devise some other rule by which the officers, especially the field-officers, should be appointed. Many of the best have been neglected, and those of little worth and less experience put in their places or promoted over their heads."

On the same day, Greene wrote, in support of the new policy: "I am far from thinking the American cause desperate, yet I conceive it to be in a critical situation. To remedy evils, the general should have power to appoint officers to enlist at large. The present existence of the civil depends upon the military power. I am no advocate for the extension of military power; neither would I advise it at present but from the fullest conviction of its being absolutely necessary. There never was a man that might be more safely trusted, nor a time when there was a louder call." Here was the proposed beginning of a new era in the war. Hitherto, congress had raised troops by requisitions on the states; and, as their requisitions had failed, leave was now asked for Washington himself to recruit and organize two-and-twenty battalions for the general service under the authority of the union.

1776. Dec. 20. On the twentieth, the very day on which Franklin reached Paris, Gates and Sullivan arrived at headquarters, at Newtown. The former was followed by five hundred effective men, who were all that remained of four New England regiments; but these few were sure to be

well led, for Stark of New Hampshire was their oldest officer. Sullivan brought Lee's division, with which he had crossed the Delaware at Easton.

No time was lost in preparing for the surprise of Trenton. Counting all the troops from head-quarters to Bristol, including the detachments which came with Gates and Sullivan and the militia of Pennsylvania, the army was reported at no more than six thousand two hundred men, and there were in fact not so many by twelve or fourteen hundred. "Our numbers," said Washington, "are less than I had any conception of; but necessity, dire necessity will, nay must, justify an attack." On the twenty-third, 1776. Dec. 23. he wrote for the watchword: "VICTORY OR DEATH." The like devoted spirit animates the words which were penned by Jay, and which the representatives of New York on that same day addressed to its people.

The general officers, especially Stirling, Mercer, Sullivan, and, above all, Greene, rendered the greatest aid in preparing the expedition; but the men who had been with Lee were so cast down and in want of every thing that the plan could not be ripened before Christmas night. Washington approved the detention at Morristown of six hundred New England men from the northern army; and sent Maxwell, of New Jersey, to take command of them and the militia collected at the same place, with orders to distress the enemy, to harass them in their quarters, to cut off their convoys, and, if a detachment should move towards Trenton or the Delaware, to fall upon their rear and annoy them on their march. Griffin, with all the force he could concentre at Mount Holly, was to engage the attention of the Hessians under Donop. Ewing, with more than five hundred men, who lay opposite Trenton, was to cross near the town. Putnam, to whom Washington took care to send orders, was at the last moment to lead over a force from Philadelphia. The most important subsidiary movement was to be made with about two thousand troops from Bristol, and of this party Gates was requested to take the lead. "If you could only stay there two or three days, I should be glad," said Washington, using the language of entreaty.

The country people were supine or hostile, and environed the camp with spies. But the British commander in New Jersey, though informed of the proposed attack on Trenton, and though the negroes in the town used to jeer at the Hessians that Washington was coming, persuaded himself there would be no crossing of the river with a large force, "because the running ice would make the return desperate or impracticable." "Besides," he wrote on the twenty-first, "Washington's men have neither shoes nor stockings nor blankets, are almost naked, and dying of cold and want of food. On the Trenton side of the Delaware they have not altogether three hundred men; and these stroll in small parties under a subaltern, or at most a captain, to lie in wait for dragoons."

1776. Dec. 24. The eve before Christmas, past eleven at night, Grant again sent word to Donop: "Washington has been informed that our troops have marched into winter quarters, and that we are weak at Trenton and Princeton. I don't believe he will attempt to make an attack upon those two places; but, be assured, my information is undoubtedly true, so that I need not advise you to be upon your guard against an unexpected attack at Trenton."[1] Rall scoffed at the idea that Americans should dare to come against him; and Donop was so unsuspecting that, after driving away the small American force from Mount Holly, where he received a wound in the head, he remained at that post to administer the oath of allegiance, and to send forward a party to Cooper's Creek, opposite Philadelphia.

European confidence in the success of the British was at its height. "Franklin's troops have been beaten by those of the king of England," wrote Voltaire; "alas! reason and liberty are ill received in this world." Vergennes, indeed, saw the small results of the campaign; but his king was not disposed to take any decided step; and, in reply to rumors favorable to the rebels, Stormont would say that he left their refutation to General Howe, whose answer

[1] I found at Cassel the original letter of Grant, written in English.

would be as complete a one as ever was given. At Cassel, Howe was called another Cæsar, who came and saw and conquered. In England, some believed Franklin had fled to France as a runaway for safety, others to offer terms. The repeated successes had fixed or converted "ninety-nine in one hundred." Burke never expected serious resistance from the colonies. "It is the time," said Rockingham, "to attempt in earnest a reconciliation with America." Even Lord North, who was apt to despond, thought that Cornwallis would sweep the American army before him, and that the first operations of the coming spring would end the quarrel. 1776. Dec. 24.

On his arrival at New York where all was mirth and jollity, Howe met the messenger who, in return for the victory on Long Island, brought him excessive encomiums from the minister and accumulated honors from the king. The young English officers were preparing to amuse themselves by the performance of plays at the theatre, for the benefit of the widows and children of sufferers by the war. The markets were well supplied; balls were given to satiety; and the dulness of evening parties was dispelled by the faro-table, where subalterns competed with their superiors, and ruined themselves by play. Howe fired his sluggish nature by wine and good cheer; his mistress spent his money prodigally, but the continuance of the war promised him a great fortune. The refugees grumbled because Lord Howe would not break the law by suffering them to fit out privateers; and they envied the floods of wealth which poured in upon him from his eighth part of prize-money on captures made by his squadron. As the fighting was over, Cornwallis sent his baggage on board the packet for England. The brothers, who were in universal favor with the army, gave the secretary of state under their joint hands an assurance of the conquest of all New Jersey; and every one in New York was looking out for festivals on the investiture of Sir William Howe as knight of the Bath. His flatterers wrote home that, unless there should be more tardiness in noticing his merit, the king would very soon use up all the honors of the peerage in rewarding his victories.

The day arrived for the concerted attack on the British posts along the Delaware; and complete success could come only from the exact co-operation of every part. Gates was the first to fail, and, from wilful disobedience and want of hope and courage, turned his back on danger, duty, and honor. He disapproved of Washington's station above Trenton: the British would secretly construct boats, pass the Delaware in his rear, and take Philadelphia; so that he ought to retire to the south of the Susquehannah. Refusing the service asked of him, and eager to intrigue with congress at Baltimore, Gates, with Wilkinson, rode away from Bristol; and, as they entered Philadelphia after dark on Christmas eve, the tread of their horses resounded in all directions through the silent wilderness of streets. Griffin, flying before Donop, had already abandoned New Jersey; Putnam would not think of conducting an expedition across the river.

1776. Dec. 25.

At nightfall, Cadwalader, who was left in sole command at Bristol, with honest zeal marched to Donk's ferry; it was the time of the full moon, but the clouds were thick and dark. For about an hour that remained of the ebb-tide the river was passable in boats, and Reed, who just then returned from a visit to Philadelphia, was able to cross on horseback; but the tide, beginning to rise, threw back the ice in such heaps on the Jersey shore that, though men on foot still got over, neither horses nor artillery could reach the land. Sending word that it was impossible to carry out their share in Washington's plan, Reed deserted the party in "the very hour that tried men's souls," and rode within the enemy's lines at Burlington, having previously obtained leave for a conference with Donop.[1] Meanwhile,

[1] All that is written in the text of this volume respecting the vacillations of Colonel Joseph Reed is drawn from documents of unquestioned authority. The passages in the Donop diary, which certainly relate to the adjutant-general, are as follows: Dec. 20: "Eodem wurde mit einer Flagge Truce an den Oberst v. Donop vom Rebellen-Obersten Reed, welcher zugleich General-Adjutant bei Washington ist, ein Brief überschickt, worinnen letzterer dem Obersten von Donop Namens des Gen. Washington proponirte: Ob es nicht gefällig, wegen Burlington des folgenden Tages mit ihm eine Unterredung zu halten, weil dieser Ort von beiden Seiten in

during one of the worst nights of December, the men waited with their arms in their hands for the floating ice to open a passage; and only after vainly suffering for many hours, they returned to their camp, to shake the snow from their garments, and creep into their tents, without fire or light. Cadwalader, and the best men

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der jetzigen Situation sehr exponirt wäre; dem Obersten Donop wurde Stunde und Ort zu dieser Unterredung zu bestimmen überlassen. Er antwortete sogleich darauf, dass seine dermalige Situation ihm nicht erlaube, sich von seinem Posten zu entfernen." Dec. 21: "Zugleich wurde des Oberst Reed's Brief, worin derselbe eine Unterredung wegen Burlington proponirte, und die darauf ertheilte Antwort communicirt. Es wäre nicht zu vermuthen dass die Rebellen, Mont Holly soutiniren und Burlington neutral declariren würden, indem letzterer Ort von der kleinen Insel vor Bristol mit 6 pfünd. beschossen und Mont Holly hingegen weggenommen werden könnte, wenn man nur wollte." Dec. 25: "Eodem schickt der Oberst v. Donop eine Flagge Truce nach Burlington, und offerirte dem Colonel Reed, die vorhin verlangte Unterredung wegen dieser Stadt mit ihm zu halten; es kam aber vom Oberst Cadwalader die Antwort zurück, dass Reed nicht gegenwärtig sey, und erst Morgen wieder zurück erwartet wäre, alsdenn erbitten würde, eine andere Zeit und Ort zu dieser Unterredung zu bestimmen."

I found at Cassel Donop's official report to General Grant, written in French, and dated Bordentown, 21 Dec., 1776. It runs thus: "Ce qui est bien sûr, c'est que le même près midi Gen. Mifflin est avancé avec un corps Rebelle sur la route de Moorstown jusqu'au Pont de trois miles éloignées de Montholly, mais qu'il n'a rien entrepris que de ruiner entièrement ce pont après qu'il est retourné à Moorstown. Le Col. Reed, qui dernièrement a reçu une protection a rencontré le Gen. Mifflin auprès de ce Pont, et lui a declaré qu'il avoit quitté le parti Rebelle, sur quoi Mifflin l'a traité très durement, le nommant a dam Raskel, et aparamment il l'a emmené comme prisonnier avec lui, puisque depuis on ne l'a plus vu à Blackhorse. L'homme qui m'a rapporté cela avoit été envoié par moi pour chercher des nouvelles de l'ennemi, et il a entendu lui-même cette conversation." From discoveries recently made in the New Jersey archives by Adjutant-general William S. Stryker, I think there can be no doubt that the Colonel Reed referred to in this passage, and in the corresponding words of the Donop German diary, was Colonel Charles Read of New Jersey, who is known to have "submitted to the enemy." Mifflin's name is used by mistake, perhaps for Griffin. I remain of the opinion, expressed by me nine years ago, that Joseph Reed "never had any intention to join the enemy." Bancroft's J. Reed, 36. That he complied with all the conditions required by the proclamation of General Howe to entitle him to British protection is certain; his letter to Donop was written without the authority, or even the knowledge, of Washington. 7 February, 1876.

about him, were confident that Washington, like themselves, must have given up the expedition. Ewing did not even make an effort to cross at Trenton; and Moylan, who set off on horseback to overtake Washington and share the honors of the day, became persuaded that no attempt could be made in such a storm, and stopped on the road for shelter.

Superior impulses acted upon Washington and his devoted soldiers. From his wasted troops he could muster but twenty-four hundred men strong enough to be his companions; but they were veterans and patriots, chiefly of New England, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Among his general officers were Greene and Mercer and Stirling and Sullivan; of field-officers and others, Stark of New Hampshire, Hand of Pennsylvania, Glover and Knox of Massachusetts, Webb of Connecticut, Scott and William Washington and James Monroe of Virginia, and Alexander Hamilton of New York. At three in the afternoon they began their march, each man carrying three days' provisions and forty rounds; and with eighteen field-pieces they reached Mackonkey's ferry just as twilight began. The current was swift and strong, hurling along masses of ice. At the water's edge, Washington asked aloud: "Who will lead us on?" and the mariners of Marblehead stepped forward to man the boats. Just then a letter came from Reed, announcing that no help was to be expected from Putnam or the troops at Bristol; and Washington, at six o'clock, wrote this note to Cadwalader: "Notwithstanding the discouraging accounts I have received from Colonel Reed of what might be expected from the operations below, I am determined, as the night is favorable, to cross the river, and make the attack on Trenton in the morning. If you can do nothing real, at least create as great a diversion as possible." Hardly had these words been sent when Wilkinson joined the troops, "whose route he had easily traced, by the blood on the snow from the feet of the men who wore broken shoes." He delivered a letter from General Gates. "From General Gates!" said Washington; "where is he?" "On his way to congress," replied Wil-

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kinson. "On his way to congress!" repeated Washington, who had only given him a reluctant consent to go as far as Philadelphia.

At that hour an American patrol of twenty or thirty men, led by Captain Anderson to reconnoitre Trenton, made a sudden attack upon the post of a Hessian subaltern, and wounded five or six men. The alarm was sounded, the Hessian brigade put under arms, and a part of Rall's regiment sent in pursuit. On their return, they reported that they could discover nothing; the attack was like those which had been made repeatedly before, and was held to be of no importance. The post was strengthened; additional patrols were sent out; but every further apprehension was put to rest; and Rall, till late into the night, sat by his warm fire, in his usual revels, while Washington was crossing the Delaware.

"The night," writes Thomas Rodney, "was as severe a night as ever I saw;" the frost was sharp, the current difficult to stem, the ice increasing, the wind high, and at eleven it began to snow. It was three in the morning of the twenty-sixth before the troops and cannon were all over; and another hour passed before they could be formed on the Jersey side. A violent north-east storm of wind and sleet and hail set in as they began their nine miles' march to Trenton, against an enemy in the best condition to fight. The weather was terrible for men clad as the Americans were, and the ground slipped under their feet. For a mile and a half they had to climb a steep hill, from which they descended to the road, that ran for about three miles between hills and through forests of hickory, ash, and black oak. At Birmingham the army was divided; Sullivan continued near the river, and Washington passed up into the Pennington road. While Sullivan, who had the shortest route, halted to give time for the others to arrive, he reported to Washington by one of his aids, that the arms of his party were wet. "Then tell your general," answered Washington, "to use the bayonet, and penetrate into the town; for the town must be taken, and I am resolved to take it." The return of the aide-de-camp was

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watched by the soldiers, who raised their heads to listen; and hardly had he spoken, when those who had bayonets fixed them without waiting for a command.

It was now broad day. The slumber of the Hessians had been undisturbed; their patrols reported that all was quiet; and the night-watch of yagers had turned in, leaving the sentries at their seven advanced posts, to keep up the communication between their right and left wings. The storm beat violently in the faces of the Americans; the men were stiff with cold and a continuous march of fifteen miles; but now when the time for the attack was come, they thought of nothing but victory. The battle was begun by Washington's party with an attack on the outermost picket on the Pennington road; the men with Stark, who led the van of Sullivan's party, gave three heartening cheers, and with the bayonet rushed upon the enemy's picket near the river. A company came out of the barracks to protect the patrol; but, surprised and astonished at the fury of the charge, they all, including the yagers, fled in confusion, escaping
1776. Dec. 26. across the Assanpink, followed by the dragoons and the party which was posted near the river bank. Washington entered the town by King and Queen Streets, now named after Warren and Greene; Sullivan moved by the river-road into Second Street, cutting off the way to the Assanpink bridge; and both divisions pushed forward with such equal ardor, as never to suffer the Hessians to form completely. The two cannon which stood in front of Rall's quarters were from the first separated from the regiment to which they belonged, and were not brought into the action. The Americans were coming into line of battle, when Rall made his appearance, received a report, rode up in front of his regiment, and, without presence of mind, cried out to them: "Forward, march; advance, advance," reeling in the saddle like one not yet recovered from a night's debauch. Before his own regiment could form in the street, a party pushed on rapidly and dismounted its two cannon, with no injury but slight wounds to Captains William Washington and James Monroe. Forest's American battery of six guns was opened upon two regiments at a distance of less than

three hundred yards, under Washington's own direction. His position was near the front, a little to the right, a conspicuous mark for musketry; but he remained unhurt, though his horse was wounded under him. The moment for breaking through the Americans was lost by Rall, who drew back the Lossberg regiment and his own, but without artillery, into an orchard east of the town, as if intending to reach the road to Princeton by turning Washington's left. To check this movement, Hand's regiment 1776. Dec. 26. was thrown in his front. By a quick resolve, the passage might still have been forced; but the Hessians had been plundering ever since they landed in the country; and, loath to leave behind the wealth which they had amassed, they urged Rall to recover the town. In the attempt to do so, his force was driven by the impetuous charge of the Americans further back than before; he was himself struck by a musket-ball; and the two regiments were mixed confusedly, and almost surrounded. Riding up to Washington, Baylor could now report: "Sir, the Hessians have surrendered." Silent joy thrilled through the breast of Washington, and he whose strong will had been strained for seventeen hours gave way to his feelings, and with clasped hands raised his eyes in thankfulness to heaven. The Knyphausen regiment, which had been ordered to cover the flank, strove to reach the Assanpink bridge through the fields on the south-east of the town; but, losing time in extricating their two cannon from the morass, they found the bridge guarded on each side; and, after a vain attempt to ford the rivulet, they surrendered to Lord Stirling on condition of retaining their swords and their private baggage. The action, in which the Americans lost not one man, lasted thirty-five minutes. One hundred and sixty-two of the Hessians who at sunrise were in Trenton escaped, about fifty to Princeton, the rest to Bordentown; one hundred and thirty were absent on command; seventeen were killed. All the rest of Rall's command, nine hundred and forty-six in number, were taken prisoners, of whom seventy-eight were wounded. The Americans gained twelve hundred small-arms, six brass field-pieces, of



which two were twelve-pounders, and all the standards of the brigade.

Until that hour, the life of the United States flickered like a dying flame. "But the Lord of hosts heard the cries of the distressed, and sent an angel for their deliverance," wrote the præses of the Pennsylvania Lutherans. "All our hopes," said Lord George Germain, "were blasted by the unhappy affair at Trenton." That victory turned the shadow of death into the morning.

CHAPTER XIV.

ASSANPINK AND PRINCETON.

DECEMBER 26, 1776—JANUARY, 1777.

HAD the combinations of Washington worked together, he must have broken up the British posts on the Delaware and at Princeton; but the failure of all the other parties doubled the fatigues of his own, for it could find no safety but in quickly recrossing the Delaware. Thus of the five remaining days' service of most of his men, more than one half would be lost; and time was moreover given to the enemy to concentrate a superior force. After snatching refreshments from the captured stores, the victorious troops, cumbered with nearly a thousand prisoners, and worn out by want of sleep and a night-march through snow and rain, set off again under sleet driven by a north-east wind, and, passing another terrible night at the ferry, recovered their position beyond the river. Care and danger and hardship seemed to nurse the health and fortitude of Washington; but Stirling and one half of the soldiers were disabled by the exposure for forty hours in the worst weather, and two men were frozen to death. 1776. Dec. 26.

The fugitive congress met at Baltimore in the darkest gloom; but Samuel Adams was there, foremost in hope and courage and influence, earnest for a measure of which the success was to gladden his soul. Up to this time, congress had left on their journals the suggestion, that a reunion with Great Britain might be the consequence of a delay in France to declare immediately and explicitly in their favor. Before Washington crossed the Delaware, this temporizing policy was thrown aside; and, before the victory at Trenton was known, it was voted to "assure Dec. 24-30.

foreign courts that the congress and people of America are determined to maintain their independence at all events." Treaties of commerce were to be offered to Prussia, to Vienna, and to Tuscany; and the intervention of these powers was invoked to prevent Russian or German troops from serving against the United States. At the same time, a sketch was drawn for an offensive alliance with France and Spain against Great Britain.

The independence which the nation pledged its faith to other countries to maintain could be secured only through the army. On the twenty-sixth of December, the urgent letters of Washington and Greene were read in congress, and referred to Richard Henry Lee, Wilson, and Samuel Adams; the usual long debates and postponements were dispensed with; and, on the next day, "congress having maturely considered the present crisis, and having perfect reliance on the wisdom, vigor, and uprightness of General Washington," resolved that, in addition to the eighty-eight battalions to be furnished by the separate states, he might himself, as the general of the United States, raise, organize, and officer sixteen battalions of infantry, three thousand light horsemen, three regiments of artillery, and a corps of engineers. Thus national troops, to be enlisted indiscriminately from all the people of all the states, were called into existence. The several states, in organizing their regiments, had given commissions to many incompetent men; Washington was authorized to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of a brigadier-general, and to fill up all vacancies. He might also take necessaries for his army at an appraised value. These extraordinary trusts were vested in him for six months. The direct exercise of central power over the country as one indivisible republic was so novel that he was said to have been appointed "dictator of America." This Germain asserted in the house of commons; this Stormont at Paris repeated to Vergennes. But the report was false; congress granted only the permission to the general to enlist and organize, if he could, a solid increase of what was then but the phantom of an army. For the disaffected whom he

1776. Dec. 26.

Dec. 27.

received authority to arrest, he was directed to account to the states of which they were respectively citizens. The financial measures of the crisis were authority to the commissioners in France to borrow two millions sterling at six per cent for ten years; vigorous and speedy punishments for such as should refuse to receive the continental currency; and an order that "five millions of dollars be now emitted on the faith of the United States." Till the bills could be executed, Washington was left penniless even of paper money. 1776. Dec. 27.

An hour before noon on the twenty-seventh, Cadwalader at Bristol heard of Washington at Trenton, and took measures to cross into New Jersey. Hitchcock's remnant of a New England brigade could not move for want of shoes, stockings, and breeches; but these were promptly supplied from Philadelphia. Meantime, Reed, who, under equal conditions, preferred the cause of America, and in the success at Trenton found relief from his moods of selfish despondency, reappeared in Bristol, never afterwards doubting to which side he should adhere; and, in the days which followed, "he evidenced a spirit and zeal which," to Washington, "appeared laudable and becoming." By his advice, the detachment under Cadwalader moved to Burlington, where they found no enemy; Donop, on hearing of the defeat of Rall, had precipitately retreated with all his force by way of Crosswicks and Allentown to Princeton, abandoning his stores and his sick and wounded at Bordentown.

Washington lost no time in renewing his scheme for driving the enemy to the extremity of New Jersey; and on the twenty-seventh he communicated his intention to Cadwalader. While his companions in arms were reposing, he was indefatigable in his preparations. Intending to remain on the east side of the Delaware, he selected Morristown as a place of refuge, and wrote urgent letters to Macdougall and Maxwell to collect forces at that point; for, said he, "if the militia of Jersey will lend a hand, I hope and expect to rescue their country." To Heath, who was receiving large re-enforcements from New England, he sent orders to render aid by way of Hackensack. Through

Lord Stirling he entreated the governor of New Jersey to convene the legislature of that state, and make the appointments of their officers according to merit. He took thought for the subsistence of the troops, which, when they should all be assembled, would form a respectable force. To cross the river was to rush into incalculable perils; not to cross the river would be a ruinous confession of weakness.

1776. Dec. 29. On the twenty-ninth, while his army, reduced nearly one half in effective numbers by fatigue in the late attack on Trenton, was crossing the Delaware, he announced to congress his purpose "to pursue the

Dec. 30. enemy and try to beat up their quarters." On the thirtieth he repaired to Trenton; but the whole of his troops and artillery, impeded by ice, did not get over till the last day of the year.

That day the term of enlistment of the eastern regiments came to an end; to these veterans the same conditions as Pennsylvania allowed to her undisciplined volunteers were offered, if they would remain six weeks longer; and with one voice they gave their word to do so, making no stipulations of their own.[1] The paymaster was out of money, and the public credit was exhausted by frequent vain promises; Washington pledged his own fortune, as did other officers, especially Stark of New Hampshire. Robert Morris had sent up a little more than five hundred dollars in hard money, to aid in procuring intelligence; again Washington appealed to him: "If it be possible, sir, to give us assistance, do it; borrow money while it can be done; we are doing it upon our private credit. Every man of interest, every lover of his country, must strain his credit upon such an occasion. No time, my dear sir, is to be lost."

Dec. 31. At Quebec, the last day of December was kept as a general thanksgiving for the deliverance of Canada; the Te Deum was chanted; in the evening the provincial militia gave a grand ball, and, as Carleton entered, the crowded assembly broke out into loud cheers, followed by

[1] Gordon, ii. 398, writes: "Near one half went off before the critical moment." This is not correct. The critical days were Jan. 1, 2, 3, in which they all rendered the most essential service.

a song in English to his praise. He drank in the strain of triumph, not dreaming that the British secretary of state had already issued orders for his disgrace.

After dismay and uncertain councils, Cornwallis, who had been prematurely crowned with the honors of victory, delayed his embarkation for Europe, and took command of the large forces collected at Princeton. At that hour, when the most urgent political and military reasons demanded the utmost energy and activity, that the British army might efface the catastrophe at Trenton, and reoccupy the posts on the Delaware by a force of unquestionable superiority, the sluggish Sir William Howe nestled lazily in his warm quarters at New York; and there he remained in comfortable indolence for nearly six months more.

On New Year's morning, Robert Morris went from house to house in Philadelphia, rousing people from their beds to borrow money of them; and early in the day he sent Washington fifty thousand dollars, with the message: "Whatever I can do shall be done for the good of the service; if further occasional supplies of money are necessary, you may depend upon my exertions either in a public or private capacity." To the president and to the committee of congress, Washington thus acknowledged the grant of unusual military power: "All my faculties shall be employed to advance those objects, and only those, which gave rise to this distinction. If my exertions should not be attended with success, I trust the failure will be imputed to the difficulties I have to combat, rather than to a want of zeal for my country and the closest attention to her interest." "Instead of thinking myself freed from all civil obligations by this mark of confidence, I shall constantly bear in mind, that as the sword was the last resort for the preservation of our liberties, so it ought to be laid aside when those liberties are firmly established. I shall instantly set about making the most necessary reforms in the army." This he wrote on New Year's Day, from Trenton, where he was attended by scarcely more than six hundred trusty men. He had timely knowledge that full seven thousand veteran troops, including the reserve, other

1777. Jan. 1.

English regiments, Donop's brigade of Hessian grenadiers and Waldeckers, a small battalion formed of the remnants of Rall's brigade, Köhler's battalion fresh from New York with its heavy artillery, eight hundred Highlanders, and a regiment of light dragoons, were moving against him. He might have passed beyond the Delaware; but he would not abandon New Jersey: he might have joined Cadwalader, whose force of eighteen hundred men held the strong post of Crosswicks, or Mifflin, who had returned from his recruiting mission and was at Bordentown with eighteen hundred volunteers; but such a retreat would have stifled the new life of the country. In the choice of measures, all full of peril, he resolved to concentrate his forces at Trenton, and await the enemy. Obedient to his call, they joined him in part on the first of January; in part, after a night-march, on the second; making collectively an army of forty-eight hundred or five thousand men; but, of these, three fifths or more were merchants, mechanics, and farmers, ignorant of war, and just from their families and warm houses, having rushed to arms in midwinter, inspired by hope and zeal to defy all perils and encounter battles by day and marches by night, with no bed but the frozen ground under the open sky.

1777. Jan. 2.

Leaving three regiments and a company of cavalry at Princeton, where Donop had thrown up arrow-headed earthworks, Cornwallis on the second led the flower of the British army to encounter Washington. Donop advised him to march in two divisions, so as to hold the direct and the roundabout road between Princeton and Trenton; but he refused to separate his forces. The air was warm and moist, the road soft, so that their march was slow. From Maidenhead, where they were delayed by skirmishers, and where one brigade under Leslie remained, Cornwallis pressed forward with more than five thousand British and Hessians. At Five Mile Run he fell upon Hand and his riflemen, who continued to dispute every step of his progress. At Shabbakong Creek, the annoyance from troops secreted within the wood on the flanks of the road embarrassed him for two hours. On the hill less than a

mile above Trenton, he was confronted by about six hundred musketeers and two skilfully managed field-pieces, supported by a detachment under Greene. This party, when attacked by the artillery of Cornwallis, withdrew in good order. Each side met with losses during the day; of the killed and wounded no trustworthy enumeration has been found. The British captured a faithless colonel of foreign birth, and probably some privates; the Americans took thirty prisoners. 1777. Jan. 2.

At four in the afternoon, Washington, placing himself with the rear, conducted the retreat through the town, and passed the bridge over the Assanpink, beyond which the main body of his army stood in admirable array, silent in their ranks, protected by batteries. The enemy, as they pursued, were worried by musketry from houses and barns; their attempt to force the bridge was repulsed. Cornwallis next sought to turn the flanks of the Americans; but the fords of the Assanpink could not be crossed without a battle. The moment was critical. The defeat of Washington might have crushed independence; the overthrow of the British army would have raised New Jersey in their rear, and have almost ended the war. Late as it was in the day, Simcoe advised at once to pass over the Assanpink to the right of "the rebels," and bring on a general action; and Sir William Erskine feared that, if it were put off, Washington might get away before morning. But the sun was nearly down; the night threatened to be foggy and dark; the British troops were worn out with skirmishes and a long march, over deep roads; the aspect of the American army was imposing. Unwilling to take any needless risk, Cornwallis sent messengers in all haste for the brigade at Maidenhead, and for two of the three regiments at Princeton, and put off the fight till the next morning. The British army, sleeping by their fires, bivouacked on the hill above Trenton, while their large pickets were pushed forward along the Assanpink, to keep a close watch on the army of Washington. Confident in their vigilance, the general officers thought their day's work done, and took their repose.

Not so Washington; for him there could be no rest. From his retreat through the Jerseys, and his long halt in the first week of December at Trenton, he knew the by-ways leading out of the place, and the cross-cuts and roads as far as Brunswick. He first ascertained by an exploring party that the path to Princeton on the south side of the Assanpink was unguarded.[1] He saw the need of avoiding a battle the next morning with Cornwallis; and the need of avoiding it in a way to mark courage and hope. He was aware that there were but few troops at Princeton; and he reasoned that Brunswick could have retained but a very small guard for its rich magazines. He therefore developed the plan which had existed in germ from the time of his deciding to re-enter New Jersey, and prepared to turn the left of Cornwallis, overwhelm the party at Princeton, and push on if possible to Brunswick, or, if there were danger of pursuit, to seek the high ground at Morristown. Soon after dark, he ordered all the baggage of his army to be removed noiselessly to Burlington. To the council of officers whom he convened, he proposed the circuitous march to Princeton. Mercer forcibly pointed out the advantages of the proposal; Saint-Clair liked it so well that, in the failing memory of old age, he took it to have been his own;[2] the adhesion of the council was unanimous.

1777. Jan. 2.

Soon after midnight, sending word to Putnam to occupy

[1] Ewald's Beyspiele grosser Helden. Ewald, who was a man of uprightness, vigilance, and judgment, is a great authority, as he was present.

[2] Saint-Clair's Narrative, 242, 243: "No one general officer except myself knew any thing of the upper country." Now, Sullivan knew it better; as did all the officers of Lee's division, and Stark, Poor, Patterson, the New England Reed, and all the officers of their four regiments. Another writer, Reed's Mercer Oration, 34, 35, is out of the way in the advice he attributes to Mercer: "One course had not yet been thought of, and this was to order up the Philadelphia militia," &c. Washington had long before ordered up the Philadelphia militia, and they were at Trenton on the first of January. Sparks's Washington, iv. 258. Washington, always modest, writes of the measure as his own. Ibid. 259. The statement in Ewald of Washington's having sent a party to reconnoitre the roundabout road is in harmony with this. Marshall, i. 131, assigns the design to Washington; so do Gordon, Ramsay, Hull who had a special command, and I believe every one till Saint-Clair, whom Wilkinson followed.

Crosswicks, Washington began to move his troops in detachments by the roundabout road to Princeton. The wind veered to the north-west; the weather suddenly became cold; and the by-road, lately impracticable for artillery, was soon frozen hard. To conceal the movement, guards were left to replenish the American camp-fires. The night had as yet no light in the firmament but the stars as they sparkled through the openings in the clouds; the fires of the British blazed round the hills on which they slumbered; the beaming fires of the Americans rose in a wall of impervious flame along the Assanpink for more than half a mile, throwing a glare on the town, the rivulet, the tree-tops, the river, and the background. The drowsy British officer who had charge of the night-watch let the flames blaze up and subside under fresh heaps of fuel, and saw nothing and surmised nothing. 1777. Jan. 3.

Arriving about sunrise in the south-east outskirts of Princeton, Washington and the main body of the army wheeled to the right by a back road to the colleges; while Mercer was detached towards the west, with about three hundred and fifty men, to break down the bridge over Stony Brook, on the main road to Trenton. Two English regiments were already on their march to join Cornwallis; the seventeenth with three companies of horse, under Mawhood, was more than a mile in advance of the fifty-fifth, and had already passed Stony Brook. On discovering in his rear a small body of Americans, apparently not larger than his own, he recrossed the rivulet, and, forming a junction with a part of the fifty-fifth and other detachments on their march, hazarded an engagement with Mercer. The parties were nearly equal in numbers; each had two pieces of artillery; but the English were fresh, while the Americans were weary from hunger and cold, the fatigues of the preceding day, their long night-march of eighteen miles, and the want of sleep. Both parties rushed toward the high ground that lay north of them, on the right of the Americans. A heavy discharge from the English artillery was returned by Neal from the American field-pieces. After a short but brisk cannonade, the Americans, climbing over a fence to con-

front the British, were the first to use their guns; Mawhood's infantry returned the volley, and soon charged with their bayonets; the Americans, for the most part riflemen without bayonets, gave way, abandoning their cannon. 1777. Jan. 3. Their gallant officers, loath to fly, were left in their rear, endeavoring to call back the fugitives. In this way fell Haslet, the brave colonel of the Delaware regiment; Neal, who had charge of the artillery; Fleming, the gallant leader of all that was left of the first Virginia regiment; and other officers of promise; Mercer himself, whose horse had been disabled under him, was wounded, knocked down, and then stabbed many times with the bayonet. Just then, Washington, who had turned at the sound of the cannon, came upon the ground by a movement which intercepted the main body of the British fifty-fifth regiment. The Pennsylvania militia, supported by two pieces of artillery, were the first to form their line. "With admirable coolness and address," Mawhood attempted to carry their battery; the way-worn novices began to waver; on the instant, Washington, from "his desire to animate his troops by example," rode into the very front of danger, and, when within less than thirty yards of the British, he reined in his horse with its head towards them, as both parties were about to fire; letting his faltering forces know that they must stand firm, or leave him to confront the enemy alone. The two sides gave a volley at the same moment; when the smoke cleared away, it was thought a miracle that Washington was untouched. By this time, Hitchcock, for whom a burning hectic made this day nearly his last, brought up his brigade; and Hand's riflemen began to turn the left of the English; these, after repeated exertions of the greatest courage and discipline, retreated before they were wholly surrounded, and fled over fields and fences up Stony Brook. The action, from the first conflict with Mercer, did not last more than twenty minutes. Washington on the battle-ground took Hitchcock by the hand, and, before his army, thanked him for his service.

Mawhood left on the ground two brass field-pieces, which, from want of horses, the Americans could not carry

off. He was chased three or four miles, and many of his men were taken prisoners; the rest joined Leslie when his brigade came up from Maidenhead.

While the larger part of the army was engaged with the troops under Mawhood, the New England regiments of Stark, Poor, Patterson, Reed, and others, drove back the fifty-fifth, which, after a gallant resistance and some loss, retreated with the fortieth to the college. Pieces of artillery were brought up to play upon them; but to escape certain capture they fled in disorder across the fields into a back road towards Brunswick. Had there been cavalry to pursue, they might nearly all have been taken. 1777. Jan. 3.

The British lost on that day about two hundred killed and wounded, and two hundred and thirty prisoners, of whom fourteen were British officers. The American loss was small, except of officers; but Mercer, who was mortally wounded, stood in merit next to Greene, and by his education, abilities, willing disposition, and love for his country, was fitted for high trusts.

At Trenton, on the return of day, the generals were astonished at not seeing the American army; and the noise of the cannon at Princeton first revealed whither it was gone. In consternation for the safety of the magazines at Brunswick, Cornwallis roused his army, and began a swift pursuit. His advanced party from Maidenhead reached Princeton, just as the town was left by the American rear. It had been a part of Washington's original plan to seize Brunswick, which was eighteen miles distant; but many of his brave soldiers, such is the concurrent testimony of English and German officers as well as of Washington, were "quite barefoot, and were badly clad in other respects;" all were exhausted by the unabated service and fatigue of two days and a night, from action to action, without shelter, and almost without refreshment; and the British were close upon their rear. So with the advice of his officers, after breaking up the bridge at Kingston over the Millstone River, Washington turned towards the highlands, and halted for the night at Somerset court-house. There, in

there, and in the surrounding villages, his troops found shelter; the largest encampment was in Spring valley on the southern slope of Madison Hill; his outposts extended to within three miles of Amboy; and, weak as was his army, the woods, the hills, and the rivers formed a barrier against an attack in winter, though Howe recalled more than a brigade of British troops from Rhode Island.

Under the last proclamation of the brothers, two thousand seven hundred and three Jerseymen, besides eight hundred and fifty-one in Rhode Island, and twelve hundred and eighty-two in the rural districts and city of New York, subscribed a declaration of fidelity to the British king; on the fourteenth of January, just as its limited period was about to expire, Germain, who grudged every act of mercy, sent orders to the Howes not to let "the undeserving escape that punishment which is due to their crimes, and which it will be expedient to inflict for the sake of example to futurity." Eleven days after the date of this unrelenting order, Washington, the harbinger and champion of union, was in a condition to demand, by a proclamation in the name of the United States, that those who had accepted British protections "should withdraw within the enemy's lines, or take the oath of allegiance to the United States of America." On the promulgation of this order, the civil difficulty from a conflict of sovereignties was felt anew; and Clark, a member of congress from New Jersey, interposed the cavil, that "an oath of allegiance to the United States was absurd before confederation." Washington, from the moment of the declaration of independence, acted persistently for one common country embracing all the independent states; but congress and the people were so far behind him, that it fell to each state to outlaw those of its inhabitants who refused allegiance to its single self, as if the Virginian owed fealty only to Virginia, the Jerseyman only to New Jersey. 1777. Jan. 25.

The results of the campaign were inauspicious for the British. Their indiscriminate rapacity, which spared neither friend nor foe, the terrible excesses of their lust, their unrestrained passion for destruction, changed the people of

New Jersey from spectators of the war, so supine that not more than a hundred of them had joined Washington in his retreat, to active partisans, animated by the zeal and courage which exasperation at personal injuries, the love of liberty and property, the regard for the sanctity of home, and the impulse to avenge wrong, could inspire.

New England except the island of Rhode Island, all central, northern, and western New York except Fort Niagara, all the country from the Delaware to Florida, were free from the invaders, who had acquired only the islands that touched New York harbor, and a few adjacent outposts, of which Brunswick and the hills round King's Bridge were the most remote. For future operations they had against them the vast extent of the coast, and the forest, which was ever recurring between the settlements. Whenever they passed beyond their straitened quarters, they were exposed to surprises, skirmishes, and hardships. They were wasted by incessant alarms and unremitting labor; their forage and provisions were purchased at the price of blood.

The contemporary British historians of the war have not withheld praise from Washington's conduct and enterprise. His own army loved their general, and had nothing against him but the little care he took of himself while in action. Cooper of Boston is the witness, that "the confidence of the people everywhere in him was beyond example." In congress, which had already much degenerated and had become distracted by selfish schemers, there were signs of impatience at his superiority, and an obstinate reluctance to own that the depressed condition of the country was due to their having refused to heed his advice. To a 1777. Feb. proposition of the nineteenth of February for giving him the nomination of general officers, John Adams objected vehemently, saying, as reported by Rush: "I am sorry to find the love of the first place prevail so very little in this house. I have been distressed to see some of our members disposed to idolize an image which their own hands have molten. I speak of the superstitious veneration which is paid to General Washington. I honor him

for his good qualities; but, in this house, I feel myself his superior. In private life I shall always acknowledge him to be mine." The temper of the body is best seen by their resolves of the twenty-fourth of February, when they voted to Washington mere "ideal re-enforcements," and then, after a debate, in which some of the New England delegates and one from New Jersey showed a willingness to insult him, they expressed their "earnest desire" that he would "not only curb and confine the enemy within their present quarters, but, by the divine blessing, totally subdue them before they could be re-enforced." Well might Washington reply: "What hope can there be of my effecting so desirable a work at this time? The whole of our numbers in New Jersey fit for duty is under three thousand." The absurd paragraph was carried by a bare majority, in which Richard Henry Lee brought Virginia to the side of the four eastern states, against the two Carolinas, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. 1777. Feb.

There were not wanting members who understood the nature of the case, and were more just to Washington. "He is the greatest man on earth," wrote Robert Morris from Philadelphia, on the first of February. From Baltimore, William Hooper, the able representative from North Carolina, thus echoed his words: "Will posterity believe the tale? When it shall be consistent with policy to give the history of that man from his first introduction into our service, how often America has been rescued from ruin by the mere strength of his genius, conduct, and courage, encountering every obstacle that want of money, men, arms, ammunition, could throw in his way, an impartial world will say with you that he is the greatest man on earth. Misfortunes are the element in which he shines; they are the groundwork on which his picture appears to the greatest advantage. He rises superior to them all; they serve as foils to his fortitude and as stimulants to bring into view those great qualities which his modesty keeps concealed. I could fill the side in his praise; but any thing I can say cannot equal his merits."

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE SEVERAL STATES OF AMERICA.

1776–1783.

HAD the decision of the war hung on armies alone, America might not have gained the victory; but the con-
1776. test involved the introduction into political life of ideas which had long been hovering in the atmosphere of humanity, and which the civilized world assisted to call into action. The spirit of the age moved the young nation to own justice as older and higher than the state, and to found the rights of the citizen on the rights of man. And yet, in regenerating its institutions, it was not guided by any speculative theory or metaphysical distinctions. Its form of government grew naturally out of its traditions by the simple rejection of all personal hereditary authority, which in America had never had much more than a representative existence. Its people were industrious and frugal; accustomed to the cry of liberty and property, they harbored no dream of a community of goods; and their love of equality never degenerated into envy of the rich. No successors of the fifth-monarchy men proposed to substitute an unwritten higher law, interpreted by individual conscience, for the law of the land and the decrees of human tribunals. The people proceeded with self-possession and moderation, after the manner of their ancestors. Their large inheritance of English liberties saved them from the necessity and from the wish to uproot their old political institutions; and, as happily the scaffold was not wet with the blood of their statesmen, there arose no desperate hatred

of England, such as the Netherlands kept up for centuries against Spain. The wrongs inflicted or attempted by the British king were felt to have been avenged by independence; respect and affection remained behind for the parent land, from which the United States had derived trial by jury, the writ for personal liberty, the practice of representative government, and the separation of the three great co-ordinate powers in the state. From an essentially aristocratic model America took just what suited her condition, and rejected the rest. Thus the transition of the colonies into self-existent commonwealths was free from vindictive bitterness, and attended by no violent or wide departure from the past.

In all the states it was held that sovereignty resides in the people; that the majesty of supreme command belongs of right to its collective intelligence; that government is to be originated by its impulse, organized by its consent, and conducted by its imbodied will; that it alone possesses the living energy out of which all powers flow forth, and to which they all return; that it is the sole legitimate master to name, directly or indirectly, every one of the officers in the state, and bind them as its servants to toil only for its good. 1776.

The American people went to their great work of building up the home of humanity without misgiving. They were confident that the judgment of the sum of the individual members of the community was the safest criterion of truth in public affairs. They harbored no fear that the voice even of a wayward majority would be more capricious or more fallible than the good pleasure of an hereditary monarch; and, unappalled by the skepticism of European kings, they proceeded to extend self-government over regions which, in all previous ages, had been esteemed too vast for republican rule. They were conscious of long and varied experience in representative forms; and of all the nations on earth they were foremost in the principles and exercise of popular power. The giant forms of monarchies on their way to ruin cast over the world their fearful shadows; it was time to construct states in the

light of truth and freedom, on the basis of inherent, inalienable right.

England was "a land of liberty;" this is her glory among the nations. It is because she nurtured her colonies in freedom, that, even in the midst of civil war, they cherished her name with affection; it is because her example proved that the imperishable principles of mental and civil freedom can form the life of government that she has endeared herself for ever to the human race.

Of the American statesmen who assisted to frame the new government, not one had been originally a republican. They had been as it were seized by the godlike spirit of freedom, and compelled to advance its banner. But, if the necessity of constructing purely popular institutions came upon them unexpectedly, the ages had prepared for them their plans and the materials with which they were to build.

The recommendations to form governments proceeded from the general congress; the work was done by the several states, in the full enjoyment of self-direction. South Carolina and Massachusetts each claimed to be of right a free, sovereign, and independent state; each bound its officers by oath to bear to it true allegiance, and to maintain its freedom and independence.

Massachusetts, which was the first state to conduct a government independent of the king, following the resolution of congress, deviated as little as possible from the letter of its charter; and, assuming that the place of governor was vacant from the nineteenth of July, 1775, it recognised the council as the legal successor to executive power. On the first day of May, 1776, in all commissions and legal processes, it substituted the name of its "government
1777. and people" for that of the king. In June, 1777, its legislature thought itself warranted by instructions to prepare a constitution; but, on a reference to the
1779. people, the act was disavowed. In September, 1779, a convention which the people had authorized framed a constitution. It was in a good measure the compilation of John Adams, who was guided by the English constitu-

tion, by the bill of rights of Virginia, and by the experience of Massachusetts herself; and this constitution, having been approved by the people, went into effect in 1780. 1780.

On the fifth of January, 1776, New Hampshire formed a government with the fewest possible changes from its colonial forms, like Massachusetts merging the executive power in the council. Not till June, 1783, did its convention form a more perfect instrument, which was approved by the people, and established on the thirty-first of the following October. 1776. 1783.

The provisional constitution of South Carolina dates from the twenty-sixth of March, 1776. In March, 1778, a permanent constitution was introduced by a simple act of the legislature, without any consultation of the people. 1776. 1778.

Rhode Island enjoyed under its charter a form of government so thoroughly republican that independence of monarchy in May, 1776, required no change beyond a renunciation of the king's name in the style of its public acts. A disfranchisement of Catholics had stolen into its book of laws; but, so soon as it was noticed, the clause was expunged. 1776.

In like manner, Connecticut had only to substitute the people of the colony for the name of the king; this was done provisionally on the fourteenth of June, 1776, and made perpetual on the tenth of the following October. In this state and in Rhode Island the assembly was chosen annually.

Before the end of June of the same year, Virginia, sixth in the series, first in the completeness of her work, came forth with her bill of rights, her declaration of independence, and her constitution, adopted at once by her legislative convention without any further consultation of the people.

On the second of July, 1776, New Jersey perfected its new, self-created charter.

Delaware next proclaimed its bill of rights, and on the twentieth of September, 1776, finished its constitution,

the representatives in convention having been chosen by the freemen of the state for that very purpose.

The Pennsylvania convention adopted its constitution on the twenty-eighth of September, 1776; but the opposition which it received, alike from the Quakers, whom it indirectly disfranchised, and from a large body of patriots, delayed its thorough organization for more than five months.

The delegates of Maryland, meeting on the fourteenth of August, 1776, framed its constitution with great deliberation; and it was established on the ninth of the following November.

On the eighteenth of December, 1776, the constitution of North Carolina was openly ratified in the congress by which it had been framed.

1777. On the fifth of February, 1777, Georgia, the twelfth state, perfected its organic law by the unanimous agreement of its convention.

Last of the thirteen came New York, whose empowered convention, on the twentieth of April, 1777, established a constitution that, in the largeness of its humane liberality, excelled them all.

1776-1783. In elective governments which sprung from the recognition of the freedom of the individual, every man might consistently claim the right of contributing by his own reason his proportionate share of influence in forming the collective reason which was to rule the state. Such was the theory; in practice, no jealous inquiry was raised respecting those who should actually participate in this sovereignty. The privilege of the suffrage had been far more widely extended in the colonies than in England; in most of the thirteen states, no discontent broke out at existing restrictions, and no disposition was manifested to depart from them abruptly by an immediate equalization of the primary political functions. The principle of the revolution involved an indefinite enlargement of the number of the electors, which could have no other term than universal suffrage; but, by general consent, the consideration of the subject was postponed. The age of twenty-one was universally required as a qualification. So, too, was residence, except that in Virginia and

South Carolina it was enough to own in the district or town a certain freehold or "lot." South Carolina required of the electors to "acknowledge the being of a God, and to believe in a future state of rewards and punishments." White men alone could claim the franchise in Virginia, in South Carolina, and in Georgia; but in South Carolina a benign interpretation of the law classed the free octaroon as a white, even though descended through an unbroken line of mothers from an imported African slave; the other ten states raised no question of color. In Pennsylvania, in New Hampshire, and partially in North Carolina, the right to vote belonged to every resident tax-payer; in Georgia, to any white inhabitant "being of any mechanic trade;" with this exception, Georgia and all the other colonies required the possession of a freehold, or of property variously valued, in Massachusetts at about two hundred dollars, in Georgia at ten pounds. Similar conditions had always existed, with the concurrence or by the act of the colonists themselves.

Maryland prescribed as its rule that votes should be given by word of mouth; Virginia and New Jersey made no change in their former usage; Rhode Island had a way of its own, analogous to its charter: each freeman was in theory expected to be present in the general court; he therefore gave his proxy to the representative by writing his name on the back of his vote; all others adopted the ballot, New York at the end of the war, the other eight without delay. 1776–1783.

The first great want common to all was a house of representatives, so near the people as to be the image of their thoughts and wishes, so numerous as to appear to every individual voter as his direct counterpart, so frequently renewed as to insure swift responsibility. Such a body every one of the British colonies had enjoyed. They now gained certainty as to the times of meeting of the assemblies, an unalterable precision in the periods of election, and in some states a juster distribution of representation. In theory, the houses of legislation should everywhere have been in proportion to population; and for this end a census was to be taken at fixed times in Pennsylvania and New

York; but in most of the states old inequalities were continued, and even new ones introduced. In New England, the several towns had from the first enjoyed the privilege of representation, and from a love of equality this custom was retained; in Virginia, the counties and boroughs in the low country, where the aristocracy founded in land and slaves had its seat, secured an undue share of the members of the assembly; the planters of Maryland, jealous of the growing weight of Baltimore, set an arbitrary and most unequal limit to the representation of that city; in South Carolina, for seven years Charleston was allowed to send thirty members, and the parishes near the sea took almost a monopoly of political power; after that period, representatives were to be proportioned according to the number of white inhabitants and to the taxable property in the several districts. In South Carolina the assembly was chosen for two years, everywhere else for but one. To the assembly was reserved the power of originating taxes. In Georgia, the delegates to the continental congress had a right to sit, debate, and vote in its house of assembly, of which they were deemed to be a part.

1776-1783.

Franklin would have one legislative body, and no more; he approved the decision of the framers of the constitution of Pennsylvania to repose all legislative power in an uncontrolled assembly. This precedent was followed in Georgia. From all the experience of former republics, John Adams argued for a legislature with two branches. But the Americans of that day neither listened to the theories of Franklin, nor to the lessons from history of John Adams; finding themselves accustomed almost from the beginning to a double legislative body, eleven of the thirteen states adhered to the ancient usage. In constructing the co-ordinate branch of the legislature, they sought to impart greater weight to their system and to secure its conservation. This branch, whether called a senate, or legislative council, or board of assistants, was less numerous than the house of representatives. In the permanent constitutions of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, the proportion of public taxes paid by a district was regarded in the assignment of

its senatorial number; in New York and North Carolina, the senate was elected by a narrower constituency than the assembly. In six of the eleven states the senate was chosen annually; but the period of service in South Carolina embraced two years, in Delaware three, in New York and Virginia four, in Maryland five. To increase the dignity and fixedness of the body, Virginia, New York, and Delaware gave it permanence by renewing, the first two one fourth, Delaware one third, of its members annually. Maryland, which of all the states showed the strongest desire to preserve political importance to the large proprietors of land, prescribed a double election for its senate. Once in five years the several counties, the city of Annapolis, and Baltimore town, chose, *viva voce*, their respective delegates to an electoral body, each member of which was "to have in the state real or personal property above the value of five hundred pounds current money." These electors were to elect by ballot "six out of the gentlemen residents of the eastern shore," and "nine out of the gentlemen residents of the western shore," of the Chesapeake Bay; the fifteen "gentlemen" thus chosen constituted the quinquennial senate of Maryland, and themselves filled up any vacancy that might occur in their number during their term of five years. This is the strongest measure which was devised to curb or balance popular power, and marks the reluctance with which its authors parted from their institutions under the crown of England. 1776-1783.

Each state had its governor or president, as in the days of monarchy; but the source of his appointment was changed, and his powers abridged. In the four New England states he was chosen directly by all the primary electors, which is the safest way in a republic; in New York, by the freeholders who possessed freeholds of the value of two hundred and fifty dollars; in Georgia, by the representatives of the people; in Pennsylvania, by the joint vote of the council and assembly, who were confined in their selection to the members of the council; in the other six states, by the joint ballot of the two branches of the legislature.

Except in Pennsylvania, a small property qualification was usually required of a representative; more, of a senator; most, of a governor. New York required only that its governor should be a freeholder; Massachusetts, that his freehold should be of the value of about thirty-three hundred dollars; New Hampshire required but half as much; South Carolina, that his plantation or freehold, counting the slaves "settled" upon it, should be of the value of forty-two thousand eight hundred dollars in currency.

In New York and Delaware, the governor was chosen for three years; in South Carolina, for two; in all the rest, for only one. South of New Jersey, the capacity of re-election was jealously restricted; in those states which were most republican there was no such restriction; in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, a governor was often re-elected for a long succession of years. 1776-1783.

In the declaration of independence, the king was complained of for having refused his assent to wholesome laws: the jealousy fostered by long conflicts with the crown led to the general refusal of a negative power to the governor. The thoughtful men who devised the constitution of New York established the principle of a conditional veto; a law might be negatived, and the veto was final, unless it should be passed again by a majority of two thirds of each of the two branches; but they unwisely confided the negative power to a council, of which the governor formed but one; Massachusetts in 1779 improved upon the precedent, and placed the conditional veto in the hands of the governor alone. In her provisional form, South Carolina clothed her executive chief with a veto power; but in the constitution of 1778 it was abrogated. In all the other colonies, the governor either had no share in making laws, or had only a casting vote, or at most a double vote in the least numerous of the two branches.

Nowhere had the governor power to dissolve the legislature, or either branch of it, and so appeal directly to the people; and, on the other hand, the governor, once elected, could not be removed during his term of office except by impeachment.

In most of the states, all important civil and military officers were elected by the legislature. The power intrusted to a governor, wherever it was more than a shadow, was still further restrained by an executive council, formed partly after the model of the British privy council, and partly after colonial precedents. In the few states in which the governor had the nomination of officers, particularly in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, they could be commissioned only with the consent of council. In New York, the appointing power, when the constitution did not direct otherwise, was confided to the governor and a council of four senators, elected by the assembly from the four great districts of the state; and in this body the governor had "a casting voice, but no other vote." This worst arrangement of all, so sure to promote faction and intrigue, was the fruit of the deliberate judgment of wise and disinterested patriots, in their zeal for administrative purity. Whatever sprung readily from the condition and intelligence of the people had enduring life; while artificial arrangements, like this of the council of appointment in New York, and like the senate of Maryland, though devised by earnest statesmen of careful education and great endowments, pined from their birth, and soon died away. 1776-1783.

The third great branch of government was in theory kept distinct from the other two. In Connecticut and Rhode Island, some judicial powers were exercised by the governor and assistants; the other courts were constituted by the two branches of the legislature. In Massachusetts and New Hampshire, the governor, with the consent of council, selected the judges; in New York, the council of appointment; but for the most part they were chosen by the legislature. In South Carolina, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, a judge might be removed, as in England, upon the address of both houses of the legislature, and this proved the wisest practical rule; in New York, he must retire at the age of sixty; in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the supreme court was chosen for seven years, in Connecticut and Rhode Island, for but one; in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, the tenure of the judicial office

was good behavior; in Maryland, even a conviction in a court of law was required before removal. Powers of chancery belonged to the legislature in Connecticut and Rhode Island; in South Carolina, to the lieutenant-governor and the privy council; in New Jersey, the governor and council were the court of appeals in the last resort. The courts were open to all, without regard to creed or race.

The constitution of Massachusetts required a system of universal public education as a vital element in the state. The measure was a bequest from their fathers, endeared by a long experience of its benefits, and supported by the reflective judgment of the people. As yet, the system was established nowhere else except in Connecticut. Pennsylvania aimed at no more than "to instruct youth at low prices." The difference between the two systems was infinite. The first provided instruction at the cost of the state for every child within its borders, and bound up its schools in its public life; while the other only proposed to dole out a bounty to the poor.

1776-1783.

How to secure discreet nominations of candidates for high office was cared for only in Connecticut. There, twenty men were first selected by the vote of the people; and, out of these twenty, the people at a second election set apart twelve to be the governor and assistants. This method was warmly recommended by Jay to the constituent convention of New York.

Thus far the American constitutions bore a close analogy to that of England. The English system was an aristocracy, partly hereditary, partly open, partly elective, with a permanent executive head; the American system was in idea an elective government of the best. Some of the constitutions required the choice of persons "best qualified," or "persons of wisdom, experience, and virtue." These clauses were advisory; the suffrage was free, and it was certain from the first that water will not rise higher than its fountain, that untrammelled elections will give a representation of the people no better than they are; that the adoption of republican institutions, though it creates and quickens the love of country, does not change the nature

of man, or quell the fierceness of selfish passion. Timid statesmen were anxious to introduce some palpable element of permanence by the manner of constructing a council or a senate; but there was no permanence except of the people. The people, with all its greatness and all its imperfections, was immortal, or at least had perpetual succession; its waves of thought, following eternal laws, were never still, flowing now with gentle vibrations, now in a sweeping flood; and upon that mighty water the fortunes of the state were cast. 1776-1783.

That nothing might be wanting to the seeming hazard of the experiment, or to the certainty of its success, full force was given to one principle which was the supreme object of universal desire. That which lay nearest the heart of the American people, that which they above all demanded, from love for freedom of inquiry, and from the earnestness of their convictions, was not the abolition of hereditary monarchy and hereditary aristocracy, not universal suffrage, not the immediate emancipation of slaves; for more than two centuries the humbler Protestant sects had sent up the cry to heaven for freedom to worship God. To the panting for this freedom half the American states owed their existence, and all but one or two their increase in free population. The immense majority of the inhabitants of the thirteen colonies were Protestant dissenters; and from end to end of their continent, from the rivers of Maine and the hills of New Hampshire to the mountain valleys of Tennessee and the borders of Georgia, one voice called to the other, that there should be no connection of the church with the state, that there should be no establishment of any one form of religion by the civil power, that "all men have a natural and unalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences and understandings." With this great idea the colonies had travailed for a century and a half; and now, not as revolutionary, not as destructive, but simply as giving utterance to the thought of the nation, the states stood up in succession, in the presence of one another, and before God and the world, to bear their witness in favor of restoring independence to conscience and the mind.

Henceforward, worship was known to the law only as a purely individual act, a question removed from civil jurisdiction, and reserved for the conscience of every man.

In this first grand promulgation by states of the "creation-right" of mental freedom, some shreds of the old system clung round the new; but the victory was gained for the collective American people. The declaration of independence rested on "the laws of nature and of nature's God;" in the separate American constitutions, New York, the happy daughter of the ancient Netherlands, true to her lineage, did, "in the name of" her "good people, ordain, determine, and declare the free exercise of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, to all mankind;" for the men of this new commonwealth felt themselves "required, by the benevolent principles of national liberty, not only to expel civil tyranny, but also to guard against that spiritual oppression and intolerance wherewith the bigotry and ambition of weak and wicked princes have scourged mankind." Independent New York with even justice secured to the Catholic equal liberty of worship and equal civil franchises, and almost alone had no religious test for office. Her liberality was wide as the world and as the human race. Henceforth, no man on her soil was to suffer political disfranchisement for creed or lineage or color; the conscious memory of her people confirms, what honest history must ever declare, that at the moment of her assertion of liberty she placed no constitutional disqualification on the free black. Even the emancipated slave gained instantly with his freedom equality before the constitution and the law. New York placed restrictions on the suffrage and on eligibility to office; but those restrictions applied alike to all. The alien before naturalization was required to renounce allegiance to foreign powers, alike ecclesiastical or civil.

1776-1783.

The establishment of freedom of conscience, which brought with it absolute freedom of mind, of inquiry, of speech, and of the press, was, in the several states, the fruit not of philosophy, but of Protestant sects and the natural love of freedom. Had the Americans been skeptics, had they

wanted faith, they could have founded nothing. Let not the philosopher hear with scorn that their constitutions were so completely the offspring of the past, and not the phantasms of theories, that at least seven of them required some sort of religious test as a qualification for office. In Maryland and Massachusetts, it was enough to declare "belief in the Christian religion;" in South Carolina and Georgia, in "the Protestant religion;" in North Carolina, "in God, the Protestant religion, and the divine authority of the Old and of the New Testament;" in Pennsylvania, the test was "a belief in God, the creator and governor of the universe, the rewarder of the good and punisher of the wicked," with a further acknowledging "the scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration." Beside this last acknowledgment, Delaware required the officer to "profess faith in God the Father, Jesus Christ his only Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for evermore." 1776-1783.

These restrictions were but incidental reminiscences of ancient usages and dearly cherished creeds, not vital elements of the constitutions; and they were opposed to the bent of the American mind. In the states where they were established, they created discussions, chiefly on the full enfranchisement of the Catholic and of the Jew; and they were eliminated, almost as soon as their inconvenience arrested attention. At first, the Jew was eligible to office only in Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and Virginia; the Catholic, in those states, and in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and perhaps in Connecticut. But from the beginning the church no longer formed a part of the state; and religion, ceasing to be a servant of the government or an instrument of dominion, asserted its independence, and became a life in the soul. Public worship was voluntarily sustained. The church, no longer subordinate to a temporal power, regained its unity by having no visible head, and becoming the affair of the conscience of each individual. Nowhere was persecution for religious opinion so nearly at an end as in America, and nowhere was there so religious a people. In this universal freedom of

conscience and of worship, and of the use of reason publicly in all things, America, composed as it was of emigrants from many countries, found its nationality.

There were not wanting those who cast a lingering look on the care of the state for public worship. The conservative convention of Maryland declared that "the legislature may in their discretion lay a general and equal tax for the support of the Christian religion, leaving to each individual the appointing the money collected from him to the support of any particular place of public worship or minister;" but the power granted was never exercised. For a time Massachusetts required of towns or religious societies "the support of public Protestant teachers of piety, religion, and morality," of their own election; but as each man chose his own religious society, the requisition had no effect in large towns. In Connecticut, the Puritan worship was still closely interwoven with the state, and had moulded the manners, habits, and faith of the people; but the complete disentanglement was gradually brought about by inevitable processes of legislation. 1776-1783.

Where particular churches had received gifts or inheritances, their right to them was respected. In Maryland and South Carolina, the churches, lands, and property that had belonged to the church of England, were secured to that church in its new form; in Virginia, where the church of England had been established as a public institution, the disposition of its glebes was assumed by the legislature; and, as all denominations had contributed to their acquisition, they came to be considered as the property of the state. Tithes were nowhere continued; and the rule prevailed that "no man could be compelled to maintain any ministry contrary to his own free will and consent." South Carolina, in her legislation on religion, attempted to separate herself from the system of the other states; she alone appointed a test for the voter, and made this declaration; "The Christian Protestant religion is hereby constituted and declared to be the established religion of this state." But the condition of society was stronger than the constitution, and this declaration proved but the shadow of a system

that was vanishing away. In 1778, the administering of the test oath and the partaking of the communion according to the forms of the Episcopal Church ceased to be required as conditions for holding office.

The separation of the church and the state by the establishment of religious equality was followed by the wonderful result, that it was approved of everywhere, always, and by all. The old Anglican church, which became known as the Protestant Episcopal, wished to preserve its endowments, and might complain of their impairment; but it preferred ever after to take care of itself, and was glad to share in that equality which dispelled the dread of episcopal tyranny, and left it free to perfect its organization according to its own desires. The Roman Catholic eagerly accepted in America his place as an equal with Protestants, and found contentment and hope in his new relations. The rigid Presbyterians in America supported religious freedom; true to the spirit of the great English dissenter who hated all laws

1776-1783.

> To stretch the conscience, and to bind
> The native freedom of the mind.

In Virginia, where alone there was an arduous struggle in the legislature, the presbytery of Hanover demanded the disestablishment of the Anglican church and the civil equality of every denomination; it was supported by the voices of Baptists and Quakers and all the sects that had sprung from the people; and, after a contest of eight weeks, the measure was carried, by the activity of Jefferson, in an assembly of which the majority were Protestant Episcopalians. Nor was this demand by Presbyterians for equality confined to Virginia, where they were in a minority; it was from Witherspoon of New Jersey that Madison imbibed the lesson of perfect freedom in matters of conscience. When the constitution of that state was framed by a convention composed chiefly of Presbyterians, they established perfect liberty of conscience, without the blemish of a test. Free-thinkers might have been content with toleration, but religious conviction would accept nothing less than equality. The more profound was faith, the more it scorned to admit

a connection with the state; for, such a connection being inherently vicious, the state might more readily form an alliance with error than with truth, with despotism over mind than with freedom. The determination to leave truth to her own strength, and religious worship to the conscience and voluntary act of the worshipper, was the natural outflow of religious feeling.

1776-1783. The constitution of Georgia declared that "estates shall not be entailed, and, when a person dies intestate, his or her estate shall be divided equally among the children." The same principle prevailed essentially in other states, in conformity to their laws and their manners. But, in Virginia, a system of entails, enforced with a rigor unknown in the old country, had tended to make the possession of great estates, especially to the east of the Blue Ridge, the privilege of the first-born. In England, the courts of law permitted entails to be docked by fine and recovery; in 1705 Virginia prohibited all such innovations, and the tenure could be changed by nothing less than a special statute. In 1727 it was further enacted, that slaves might be attached to the soil, and be entailed with it. These measures riveted an hereditary aristocracy, founded not on learning or talent or moral worth or public service, but on the possession of land and slaves. It was to perfect the republican institutions of Virginia by breaking down this aristocracy, that Jefferson was summoned from the national congress to a seat in the assembly of his native state. On the twelfth of October, 1776, he obtained leave to bring in a bill for the abolishment of entails; and against the opposition of Edmund Pendleton, who was no friend to innovations, all donees in tail, by the act of this first republican legislature of Virginia, were vested with the absolute dominion of the property entailed.

To complete the reform, it was necessary to change the rules of descent, so that the lands of an intestate might be divided equally among his representatives; and this was effected through a committee, of which Jefferson, Pendleton, and Wythe were the active members, and which was charged with the revision of the common law, the British statutes

still valid in the state, and the criminal statutes of Virginia. The new law of descent was the work of Jefferson; and the candid historian of Virginia approves the graceful symmetry of the act which abolished primogeniture, and directed property into "the channels which the head and heart of every sane man would be prone to choose."

In the low country of Virginia, and of the states next south of it, the majority of the inhabitants were bondmen of another race, except where modified by mixture. The course of legislation on their condition will be narrated elsewhere. 1776-1783.

Provision was made for reforming the constitutions which were now established. The greatest obstacles were thrown in the way of change in Pennsylvania, where the attempt could be made only once in seven years by the election of a council of censors; the fewest in South Carolina, where the majority of a legislature which was no adequate representative of the people expressly assumed to itself and its successors original, independent, and final constituent power.

The British parliament, in its bill of rights, had only summed up the liberties that Englishmen in the lapse of centuries had acquired, or had wrested from their kings; the Americans opened their career of independence by a declaration of the self-evident rights of man; and this, begun by Virginia, was repeated, with variations, in every constitution formed after independence, except that of South Carolina. In that state, the amended constitution breathed not one word for universal freedom, made no assertion of human rights, and no longer affirmed that the people is the source of power. Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire proclaimed that all men are born free; Georgia recognised rights derived to Americans from "the laws of nature and reason;" at the bar of humanity and the bar of the people, South Carolina alone remained silent.

Here, then, we have the prevailing idea of political life in the United States. On the one hand, they continued the institutions received from England with as little immediate change as possible; and, on the other, they desired for their constitutions a healthy, continuous growth. They accepted

the actual state of society as the natural one resulting from the antecedents of the nation; at the same time, they recognised the right of man to make unceasing advances towards realizing political justice, and the public conscience yearned for a nearer approach to ideal perfection. Civil power remained, under slight modifications, with those who had held it before; but, for their inviolable rule in its exercise, they were enjoined to take the general principles derived from the nature of man and the eternal reason. No one thought it possible to introduce by a decree the reign of absolute right. To have attempted to strike down all evil at one blow would have been to attempt to strike down human society itself; for, from the nature of man, imperfection clings to all the works of his hands. The American statesmen were not misled by this attractive but delusive hope, even while they held that their codes of law and their constitutions should reflect ever more and more clearly the equality and brotherhood of man.

1776-1783.

America neither separated abruptly from the past, nor adhered to its decaying forms. The principles that gave life to the new institutions pervaded history like a prophecy. They did not compel a sudden change of social or of internal political relations; but they were as a light shining more and more into the darkness. In a country which enjoyed freedom of conscience, of inquiry, of speech, of the press, and of government, the universal intuition of truth promised a never-ending career of reform and progress.

CHAPTER XVI.

PREPARATIONS OF EUROPE FOR THE CAMPAIGN OF 1777. FRANCE AND HOLLAND.

DECEMBER, 1776—MAY, 1777.

WHILE Washington was toiling under difficulties without reward, a rival in Europe aspired to his place. The Count de Brøglie, disclaiming the ambition of becoming the sovereign of the United States, insinuated his willingness to be for a period of years its William of Orange, provided he could be assured of a large grant of money before embarkation; an ample revenue, the highest military rank, and the direction of foreign relations during his command; and a princely annuity for life after his return. The offer was to have been made through Kalb, the former emissary of Choiseul in the British colonies: the acknowledged poverty of the new republic scattered the great man's short-lived dream; but Kalb, though in his fifty-sixth year, affluent, and happy in his wife and children, remained true to an engagement which in company with Lafayette he had taken with Deane to serve as a major-general in the insurgent army. In him the country gained an officer who had ability and experience, spoke English well, and, though no enthusiast, was active and devoted to duty. When the American commissioner told Lafayette plainly that the credit of his government was too low to furnish the volunteers a transport, "Then," said the young man, "I will purchase one;" and, glad to be useful where he had before only shown zeal, at his own cost he bought and secretly freighted the "Victory," which was to carry himself, the veteran Kalb, and twelve other French officers to America. During the weeks of preparation, he made a

1776. Dec.

visit to England. At the age of nineteen it seemed to him a pardonable amusement to be presented to the king against whom he was going to fight; but he declined the king's offer of leave to inspect the British navy yards.

Franklin, after a stormy passage of thirty days, during which his ship, the "Reprisal," had been chased by British cruisers, and had taken two British brigantines as prizes, came within sight of France; and on the seventh of December he reached Nantes. His arrival took Europe by surprise, as no notice of his mission had preceded him. The story was spread in England that he was a fugitive for safety. "I never will believe," said Edmund Burke, "that he is going to conclude a long life, which has brightened every hour it has continued, with so foul and dishonorable a flight." All Europe inferred that a man of his years and great name would not have crossed the Atlantic but in the assured hope of happy results. The sayings that fell from him at Nantes ran through Paris and France; and on his word the nation eagerly credited what it wished to find true, that not even twenty successful campaigns could reduce the Americans; that their irrevocable decision was made; that they would be for ever an independent state, and the natural ally of France. His manner was frank; and yet, when he had spoken, his silence raised an expectation of still weightier words.

1776. Dec.

Lord Stormont, the British ambassador, was constantly protesting against the departure of French ships, laden with military stores, for America. He now demanded the restoration of the two prizes brought in to Nantes with Franklin, arguing, from the law of nations, that no prize can be a lawful one unless made under the authority of some sovereign power, whose existence has been acknowledged by other powers, and evidenced by treaties and alliances. "You cannot expect us," replied Vergennes, "to take upon our shoulders the burden of your war; every wise nation places its chief security in its own vigilance." "The eyes of Argus," said Stormont, "would not be too much for us." "And if you had those eyes," answered Vergennes, "they would only show you our sincere desire

of peace." Stormont complained that French officers were embarking for America. "The French nation," replied Vergennes, "has a turn for adventure." The ambassador reported how little his remonstrances were heeded. Even Maurepas, who professed to aim at preserving peace, was drawn along by his easiness of temper, his love of artifice, and the desire to maim the British by secret wounds. To strike the nation's rival, covertly or openly, was the sentiment of nearly every Frenchman except the king. Artois, the king's second brother, avowed his good-will for the Americans, and longed for a war with England. "We shall be sure to have it," said his younger brother to a friend of the Americans. 1776. Dec.

Franklin reached Paris on the twenty-first of December, and was welcomed with wonderful unanimity. His fame as a philosopher, his unfailing good-humor, the dignity and ease of his manners, the plainness of his dress, his habit of wearing his straight, thin, gray hair without powder, contrary to the fashion of that day in France, acted as a spell. The venerable impersonation of the republics of antiquity seemed to have come to accept the homage of the gay capital. The national cry was in favor of the "insurgents," for so they were called, and never rebels; their cause was the cause of all mankind; they were fighting for the liberty of France in defending their own. Some of the constitutions of the colonies, separating the state from the church, and establishing freedom of worship, were translated, and read with rapture. Those who lived under arbitrary power did not disguise their longing for freedom. The friends of Choiseul heaped civilities on Franklin, and were persistent in their clamors that now was the happy moment for France to take a lasting revenge on her haughty enemy. But he betrayed no symptoms of sharing their impatience, avoiding jealousies by keeping the company of men of letters, and appearing to be absorbed in the pursuits of science.

Charles Fox, being at that time over in Paris, sought and obtained his intimacy. As the aged and the youthful statesmen conversed together on the subject of the war, Franklin called to mind the vain efforts of Christendom, in the days

of the crusades, to gain possession of the Holy Land; and foretold that, "in like manner, while Great Britain might carry ruin and destruction into America, its best blood and its treasure would be squandered and thrown away to no manner of purpose."

Meantime, the policy of the French court unfolded itself. In the morning of the twenty-eighth, the three American commissioners waited by appointment on Vergennes. He read their commissions, assured them protection, and received the plan of congress for a treaty with France. Vergennes spoke freely to the commissioners of the attachment of the French nation to their cause. Prizes taken under the American flag might be brought into French ports, with such precautions as would invalidate complaints from Great Britain. Of Franklin he requested a paper on the condition of America. Their future intercourse he desired might be most strictly secret, without the intervention of any third person. He added that, as France and Spain were in accord, the commissioners might communicate freely with the Spanish ambassador.

1776. Dec.

The Count de Aranda, then fifty-eight years old, was of the grandees of Aragon. By nature proud, impetuous, restless, and obstinate, he had never disciplined his temper, and his manners were ungenial. A soldier in early life, he had been attracted to Prussia by the fame of Frederic; he admired Voltaire, D'Alembert, and Rousseau; and in France he was honored for his superiority to superstition. His haughty self-dependence and force of will just fitted him for the service of Charles III. in suppressing the riots of Madrid and driving the Jesuits from Spain. As an administrative reformer, he began with too much vehemence; but thwarted by the stiff formalities of officials, and the jealousies of the clerical party, he withdrew from court to fill the embassy at Paris, where he was disquieted by eagerness for more active employment. Devoted to the French alliance, he longed to see France and Spain inflict a mortal blow on the power of England. But he was a daring schemer and bad calculator; and, on much of the business with France relating to America, he was not consulted.

On the twenty-ninth of December, 1776, and again six days later, the American commissioners held secret but barren interviews with Aranda. He could only promise American privateers, with their prizes, the same security in Spanish ports which they found in those of France; he had no authority to expound the intentions of his king; his opinions, which passionately favored the most active measures in behalf of America, were known to his own government, and passed unheeded. He did not deceive the sagacity of Franklin, who always advised his country "to wait with dignity for the applications of others, and not go about suitoring for alliances;" but, a few weeks later, Arthur Lee took from Aranda a passport for Madrid. 1777. Jan.

On the fifth of January, the commissioners presented to Vergennes a written request for eight ships of the line, for ammunition, brass field-pieces, and twenty or thirty thousand muskets. The reasoning was addressed alike to France and Spain: "The interest of the three nations is the same; the opportunity of securing a commerce, which in time will be immense, now presents itself; if neglected, it may never return; delay may be attended with fatal consequences." This paper excited no interest in the Spanish government, which was only anxious to secure the exclusive commerce of its own colonies, and did not aspire to that of the United States. At Versailles, the petition was reported to the king, in the presence of Maurepas, and made the subject of the calmest deliberation; and, on the thirteenth, Gerard, meeting the commissioners by night, at a private house in Paris, read to them the careful answer which had received the royal sanction. The king could furnish the Americans neither ships nor convoys, for such a partiality would be a ground of war, into which he would not be led but by methods analogous to the dignity of a great power, and by the necessity of his important interests. "Time and events must be waited for, and provision made to profit by them. The united provinces," so the new republic was styled, "may be assured that neither France nor Spain will make them any overture that can in the least contravene their essential interests; that they both, wholly free from

every wish for conquests, always have singly in view to make it impossible for the common enemy to injure the united powers. The commercial facilities afforded in the ports of France and Spain, and the tacit diversion of the two powers whose expensive armaments oblige England to divide her efforts, manifest the interest of the two crowns in the success of the Americans. The king will not incommode them in deriving resources from the commerce of his kingdom, confident that they will conform to the rules prescribed by the precise and rigorous meaning of existing treaties, of which the two monarchs are exact observers. Unable to enter into the details of their supplies, he will mark to them his benevolence and good-will by destining for them secret succors which will extend their credit and their purchases."

Of this communication, which was due to the confidence inspired by Franklin, the promises were faithfully kept. Half a million of livres was to be paid to the banker of the commissioners quarterly, the first instalment on the sixteenth. After many ostensible hindrances, the "Seine," the "Amphitrite," and the "Mercury," laden with warlike stores by Deane and Beaumarchais, were allowed to set sail. Of these, the first was captured by the British; but the other two reached their destination in time for the summer campaign. The commissioners were further encouraged to enter into a contract with the farmers-general to furnish fifty-six thousand hogsheads of tobacco; and on this contract they received an advance of a million livres.

1777. Feb. To France the British ministry sent courteous remonstrances; towards the weaker power of Holland they were overbearing. A commerce existed between St. Eustatius and the United States: the British admiral at the leeward islands was "ordered to station proper cruisers off the harbor of that island, and to direct their commanders to search all Dutch ships and vessels going into or carrying out of the said harbor, and to send such of them as should be found to have any arms, ammunition, clothing, or materials for clothing on board, into some of his majesty's ports, to be detained until further orders." The king

"perused, with equal surprise and indignation," the papers which proved that the principal fort on the island had returned the salute of the American brigantine "Andrew Doria," and that the governor had had "the insolence and folly" to say: "I am far from betraying any partiality between Great Britain and her North American colonies." The British ambassador at the Hague, following his instructions, demanded of their high mightinesses the disavowal of the salute and the recall of the governor: "till this satisfaction is given, they must not expect that his majesty will suffer himself to be amused by simple assurances, or that he will hesitate for an instant to take the measures that he shall think due to the interests and dignity of his crown." This language of contempt and menace incensed all Holland, especially the city of Amsterdam; and a just resentment influenced the decision of the states and of the Prince of Orange. Van de Graaf, the governor, who was the first person abroad to salute the congress colors with their thirteen stripes, was recalled; but the states returned the paper of Yorke, and the Dutch minister in London complained directly to the king of "the menacing tone of the memorial, which appeared to their high mightinesses too remote from that which is usual, and which ought to be usual, between sovereigns and independent powers." As the result, the states demanded a number of armed ships to be in readiness; and thus one step was taken towards involving the United Provinces in the war. 1777. Feb.

The measures sanctioned by the king of France were a war in disguise against England; but he professed to be unequivocally for peace, and was so dull as not to know that he was forfeiting his right to it. After long research, with the best opportunities, I cannot find that on any one occasion he expressed voluntary sympathy with America; and he heard the praises of Franklin with petulance. It was the philosophic opinion of France which swayed the cabinet to the side of the young republic. Since Turgot and Malesherbes had been discharged, there was no direct access for that opinion to give advice to the monarch; and it now penetrated the palace through the intrigues of the

author of "Figaro." With profuse offers to Maurepas of devoted service, and a wish to make his administration honored by all the peoples of the world, Beaumarchais, 1777. March. on the thirtieth of March, besought him imploringly to overcome his own hesitation and the scruples of the king, in words like these:

"Listen to me, I pray you. I fear, above all, that you underrate the empire which your age and your wisdom give you over a young prince whose heart is formed, but whose politics are still in the cradle. You forget that this soul, fresh and firm as it may be, has many times been bent, and even brought back from very far. You forget that as dauphin Louis XVI. had an invincible dislike to the old magistracy, and that their recall honored the first six months of his reign. You forget that he had sworn never to be inoculated, and that eight days after the oath he had the *virus* in his arm. There is no one who does not know it, and no one who excuses you for not using the proudest right of your office, that of giving effect to the great things which you bear in your soul. I shall never have a day of true happiness if your administration closes without accomplishing the three grandest objects which can make it illustrious: the abasement of the English by the union of America and France, the re-establishment of the finances, and the concession of civil existence to the Protestants of the kingdom by a law which shall commingle them with all the subjects of the king. These three objects are to-day in your hands. What successes can more beautifully crown your noble career? After such action there could be no death: the dearest life of man, his reputation, survives over all, and becomes eternal."

The disfranchisement of Protestants already began to be modified: the office of comptroller-general, of which the incumbent was required to take an oath to support the Catholic religion, was abolished in favor of the Calvinist Necker, a rich Parisian banker, able as a financier, by birth a republican of Geneva, the defender of the protective system against Turgot; and on the second of July, after a novitiate as an assistant, he was created director-general of the

finances, but without a seat in the cabinet. The king consented because he was told that the welfare of France required the appointment; Maurepas was pleased, for he feared no rivalry from a Protestant alien. Nor was Necker suited to become a leading statesman, for his vanity could get the better of his public spirit. 1777.

The king could not suppress the zeal that prevailed in France, though "he would break out into a passion whenever he heard of help furnished to the Americans." After a stay of three weeks on the north side of the channel, Lafayette travelled, with Kalb as his companion, from Paris to Bordeaux. He and his party hastened in the "Victory" to escape from France to the Spanish port of Los Pasages. There he received the order of the king to give up his expedition; but after some vacillation, and a run to Bordeaux and back, he braved the order, and, on the twenty-sixth of April, embarked for America. The English lay in wait for him, eager to consign him to a prison. To his young wife, whom he left far advanced in her second pregnancy, he wrote on board the "Victory," at sea: "From love to me become a good American; the welfare of America is closely bound up with the welfare of all mankind; it is about to become the safe asylum of virtue, tolerance, equality, and peaceful liberty." The women of Paris applauded his heroism; the queen gave him her admiration; public opinion extolled "his strong enthusiasm in a good cause;" the indifferent spoke of his conduct as "a brilliant folly." "The same folly," said Vergennes, "has turned the heads of our young people to an inconceivable extent."

He was soon followed by Casimir Pulaski, a Polish nobleman illustrious in Europe for his virtues and his misfortunes. In the war for the independence of his native land, he lost his father and his brothers. After his attempt to carry off the king of Poland, his property was confiscated, and he was sentenced to outlawry and death; and now he lived in exile at Marseilles, in the utmost destitution, under an adopted name. Through Rulhière, the historian of Poland, Vergennes paid his debts and recommended him to Frank-

lin, who gave him a conveyance to the United States, and explained to congress how much he had done for the freedom of his country. Stormont called him "an assassin," as he had called the American deputies malefactors that deserved the gallows.

In April and May, Joseph II. of Austria passed six weeks at Paris, in the hope of winning the consent of France to his acquiring Bavaria by inheritance. In conversation he was either silent on American affairs, or took the side which was very unpopular in the French capital; excusing himself to the Duchess of Bourbon by saying: "I am a king by trade;" nor would he permit a visit from Franklin and Deane, or even consent to meet them in his walks; though he received from the Tuscan minister, the
1777. Abbé Niccoli, who was a zealous abettor of the insurgents, a paper justifying their conduct and explaining their resources.

Ships were continually leaving the ports of France for the United States, laden with all that they most needed, and American trading-vessels were received and protected. Care was taken to preserve appearances, so that the British government, which knew very well what was doing, might not be compelled to declare war against France, for each nation wished to postpone hostilities. When Stormont remonstrated, a ship bound for America would be stopped, and, if warlike stores were found on board, would be compelled to unload them; but presently the order would be forgotten, the ship would take in its cargo and set sail, and the ever renewed complaints of the English ambassador would be put aside by the quiet earnestness of Vergennes and the polished levity of Maurepas.

The use made by American privateers of every convenient French harbor was a more defiant violation of public law. The king refused to restore their prizes; but orders were given that American privateers should be admitted into French harbors only in cases of extreme urgency, and should be furnished with no more than enough to enable them to regain their own ports. For all that, the "Reprisal," after replenishing its stores at Nantes, cruised off the French

coast, and its five new prizes, one of which was the royal packet between Lisbon and Falmouth, were unmoored in the harbor of L'Orient. Stormont hurried to Vergennes to demand that the captive ships, with their crews and cargoes, should be delivered up. "You come too late," said Vergennes; "orders have already been sent that the American ship and her prizes must instantly put to sea." The "Reprisal" continued its depredations till midsummer, when it was caught by the British; but, before its capture, two other privateers were suffered to use French harbors as their base. The facts were open; the excuses deceived no one; the rule of public law was not questioned. Stormont remonstrated incessantly, and sometimes with passion; but the English ministers were engaged in a desperate effort to reduce their former colonies in one campaign, and avoided an immediate rupture. 1777.

While unmeaning assurances of a wish for continued peace were repeated by rote, Vergennes never dissembled to himself that his policy was inconsistent with every duty towards a friendly power; he professed no justification, except that England was an inveterate enemy, whose enfeeblement was required for the future tranquillity of France. His measures were chosen to promote the independence of the United States, with a full knowledge that they led necessarily to an open war. Complaints and rejoinders were unceasing; but both parties were reluctant to lay down in writing the principles of national law by which they regulated their conduct. France always expressed the purpose to conform to treaties, and England would never enumerate the treaties which she wished to be considered as still in force. A profession of neutrality would have been resented by England as an insult and a wrong; Vergennes, though in the presence of Lord Stormont he incidentally called America a republic, never recognized the Americans as a belligerent power, but, viewing the colonies as a part of the British dominions, threw upon England the burden of maintaining her own municipal laws. England claimed that France should shut her harbors against American privateers; and Vergennes professed to admit them

only when in distress, and to drive them forth without delay. England insisted that no arms or munitions
1777. of war should be exported to America, or to ports to which Americans could conveniently repair for a supply; Vergennes, rather acknowledging the rightfulness of the demand, represented the Americans and their friends as escaping his vigilance. England was uneasy at the presence of American commissioners in Paris; Vergennes compared the house of a minister to a church which any one might enter, but with no certainty that his prayers would be heard. England claimed the right of search; Vergennes admitted it in the utmost latitude in the neighborhood of any part of the British dominions, but demurred to its exercise in mid-ocean. England did not scruple to seize and confiscate American property wherever found; France held that on the high seas American property laden in French ships was inviolable. England delayed its declaration of war from motives of convenience; France knew that war was imminent, and prepared for it with diligence.

CHAPTER XVII.

PREPARATIONS OF EUROPE FOR THE CAMPAIGN OF 1777, CONTINUED; THE ASPECT OF SPAIN ON AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

1777.

France preferred to act in perfect concert with Spain, which by her advanced position on the Atlantic seemed destined to be the great ocean power of Europe, and which, more than any other kingdom, was touched by questions of colonial independence. One of her own poets, using the language of imperial Rome, had foretold the discovery of the western world; her ships first entered the harbors of the New Indies, first broke into the Pacific, first went round the earth; Spanish cavaliers excelled all others as explorers of unknown realms, and, at their own cost, conquered for their sovereigns almost a hemisphere. After a long period of decline, this proud and earnest people, formed out of the most cultivated races and nations, Aryan and Semitic, Iberians, Celts, Phœnicians, Romans, Jews, Vandals crossed with Slavonian blood, Germans, and Saracens, counting among its great men Seneca and Trajan, Averrhoes and the Cid, Cervantes and Velasquez, devout even to bigotry in its land of churches, the most imaginative and poetic among the nations, was seen to be entering on a career of improvement. Rousseau contemplated its future with extravagant hope; D'Alembert predicted its recovery of a high position among the powers of the world; Spain was the only country of which Frederic of Prussia envied the sovereign, for the delights of its climate, and the opportunity offered to its ruler to renew its greatness. For want of a good government by which the people could have been led, of organs to concentre their will, of liberty to develop 1777.

their resources, they were destined to move towards their regeneration through a century of afflictions, to find that the monarchy to which they were devoted was crumbling away their strength and corrupting public morals, that there was no political life, no hope but in themselves.

During the long struggle of Spain to emancipate itself from the dominion of the Moors, the cross had been the emblem of its national existence as well as of Christian civilization. Religion, the monarchy, Spanish nationality, were all as one; the enthusiasm of faith was a patriotic enthusiasm, reverencing alike the church and the throne, deeply seated in tradition and in hope, as intolerant of resistance, or even of doubt, as of treason against the state, inquisitive of dissent, hardening into bigotry to such a degree that even the sciences which the Saracens had cultivated were regarded with distrust as the pursuits of materialists. Centuries of wars for the very being of the kingdom had thrown a halo round the profession of arms; the pride of chivalry scorned the humble virtues of industry, and even the laws cast dishonor on mechanic labor. The prelates, by wholesale almsgiving, sanctified and perpetuated the idleness of beggary. Just when the discovery of America opened a boundless career to colonial enterprise, the house of Hapsburg succeeded to the throne of Castile and Aragon, and wasted the resources of the united kingdoms in the animosities of a foreign family. The consolidation of all Spain into one country, for which the Austrian dynasty had during two centuries vainly toiled, signalized the accession of the grandson of Louis XIV. of France; but that blessed unity was gained at the too great price of the time-honored liberties of its ancient kingdoms.

1777. Charles III., who now held the sceptre in Spain, was the best of the Spanish Bourbons. It is touching to see the affection with which the degeneracy of his immediate successors leads Spanish historians to dwell on his memory. He was of a merciful disposition, and meant well for the land he ruled, slowly and steadily seeking the improvement of its condition; but he was more devoted to the principle of monarchy than to Spain. He was an obsti-

nate stickler for regality against the pope; and for that he had exiled the Jesuits, and demanded the abolition of their order. But under the influence of his confessor, a monk of the worst type, he restored vitality to the inquisition, suffered it to publish the papal bull which granted it unlimited jurisdiction, and, by way of excuse for his consent to its arraigning on the most frivolous grounds one of his best administrative officers for "atheism, heresy, and materialism," declared that "he would have delivered up to its tribunal his own son."

Spain believed herself in need of allies. Between the peoples of France and Spain there was no affection; so in August, 1761, a family compact was established between their kings. In forming this alliance, not one Spaniard took part: the act was that of the Bourbon families; the agents on the part of the Spanish branch were Wall and Grimaldi, one of whom was an adventurer from Ireland, the other from Italy.

It seemed the dawn of better days for Spain, when, in February, 1777, the universal popular hatred, quickened by the shameful failure of the expedition against Algiers, drove the babbling, incompetent Grimaldi from the ministry and from the country. On the eighteenth he was succeeded by Don Jose Moniño, Count de Florida Blanca. For the first time for more than twenty years, Spain obtained a ministry composed wholly of Spaniards; and, for the first time since the days of Ferdinand and Isabella, a Spanish policy began to be formed. 1777. Feb.

The new minister, son of a provincial notary, had been carefully educated; following his father's profession, he became one of the ablest advocates of his day, and attained administrative distinction. In March, 1772, he went as ambassador to Rome, where by his intrigues Cardinal Ganganelli was elected pope, and the order of the Jesuits was abolished. He, too, controlled the choice of Ganganelli's successor. Now forty-six years old, esteemed for strong good sense and extensive information, for prudence, personal probity, and honest intentions, he placed his views of ambition in useful projects, and was bent upon enlarging

the commerce of Spain, and making the kingdom respected. A devoted Catholic, he was equally "a good defender of regality;" he restrained the exorbitant claims of the church, and was no friend to the inquisition. Much given to reflection, he was cold and excessively reserved; a man of few words, though his words were to the purpose. Feebleness of health unfitted him for indefatigable labor, and was perhaps one of the causes why he could not bear contradiction, nor even hear a discussion without fretting himself into a passion. To his intercourse with foreign powers he brought something of duplicity and crafty cunning. Like Grimaldi, he professed the greatest regard for the interests and welfare of France; but, unlike Grimaldi, his heart was the heart of a Spaniard. In his manners he was awkward and ill at ease. He spoke French with difficulty. With the vanity of a man of considerable powers, who from a humble station had reached the highest under the king, he clung to office with tenacity. His character and unfailing subservience fastened his influence on Charles III., 1777. and his supremacy continued to the end of the reign. But, for the present, his natural slowness of decision was increased by his inexperience.

By far his ablest colleague, and perhaps the ablest statesman of Spain, was Galvez, the minister for the Indies, that is, for the colonies. Like Florida Blanca, he had been taken from the class of advocates. A mission to Mexico had made him familiar with the business of his department, to which he brought honesty and most laborious habits, a lingering prejudice in favor of commercial monopoly, and the purpose to make the Spanish colonies self-supporting both for production and defence.

On entering upon office, Florida Blanca was met at the threshold by the question of the aspect of the American revolution on the interests of Spain; and, as Arthur Lee was already on his way to Madrid, it seemed to demand an immediate solution. But a court which venerated the crown equally with the cross could not sanction a rebellion of subjects against their sovereign. Next, Spain was of all the maritime powers the largest possessor of colonial acqui-

sitions; and how could its government concede the principle of a right in colonies to claim independence? And how could it give an example to England and the world of interference in behalf of such independence? Moreover, the rising state was a republic; and, in addition to their fixed abhorrence of the republican principle, the Spanish ministers foreboded danger to their own possessions from the example, from the strength, and from the ambition of the Americans, whom they feared to see cross the Alleghanies and prepare to contest with them the Mississippi. Whatever might betide, the Spanish government would never become the ally of the insurgents, and would never befriend their purpose of independence. 1777.

Add to this, that an American alliance involved a war with England, and that Spain was unprepared for war. Equal to Great Britain in the number of her inhabitants, greatly surpassing that island in the extent of her home territory and her colonies, she did not love to confess or to perceive her inferiority in wealth and power. Her colonies brought her no opulence, for their commerce, which was soon to be extended to seven ports, then to twelve, and then to nearly all, was still confined to Cadiz; the annual exports to Spanish America had thus far fallen short of four millions of dollars in value, and the imports were less than the exports. Campomanes was urging through the press the abolition of restrictions on trade; but for the time the delusion of mercantile monopoly held the ministers fast bound. The serious strife with Portugal had for its purpose the occupation of both banks of the river La Plata, that so the mighty stream might be sealed up against all the world but Cadiz. As a necessary consequence, Spanish shipping received no development; and, though the king constructed ships of the line and frigates, he could have no efficient navy, for want of proper nurseries of seamen. The war department was in the hands of an indolent chief, so that its business devolved on O'Reilly, whose character is known to us from his career in Louisiana, and whose arrogance and harshness were revolting to the Spanish nation. The revenue of the kingdom fell short of twenty-one millions of

dollars, and there was a notorious want of probity in the management of the finances. In such a state of its navy, army, and treasury, how could it make war on England?

The aged king wished to finish his reign in unbroken tranquillity; Florida Blanca and Galvez saw that Spain was not in a condition to embroil itself with the greatest maritime power of the day: unreserved assurances of a preference for peace were given to the British envoy, and repeated by the Spanish embassy in London, and it was declared that an American emissary should not be allowed to appear in Madrid. Arthur Lee was stopped at Burgos, where he must wait for Grimaldi, who was on his way to Italy. They met on the fourth of March, with Gardoqui as interpreter, for Lee could speak nothing but English. Grimaldi, who describes him as an obstinate man, amused him with desultory remarks and professions: the relation between France and Spain was intimate; the Americans would find at New Orleans three thousand barrels of powder and some store of clothing, which they might take on credit; Spain would perhaps send them a well-freighted ship from Bilbao; but the substance of the interview was, that Lee must return straight to Paris. "All attempts of the like kind from agents of the rebellious colonies will be equally fruitless:" so spoke Florida Blanca again and again to the British minister at Madrid; "his Catholic majesty is resolved not to interfere in any manner in the dispute concerning the colonies;" "it is, and has been, my constant opinion that the independence of America would be the worst example to other colonies, and would make the Americans in every respect the worst neighbors that the Spanish colonies could have." In all this there is no room to doubt that
1777. he was sincere; for the report of the French ambassador at Aranjuez is explicit, "that it was the dominant wish of the Catholic king to avoid war, that he longed above all things to end his days in peace."

Yet the Spanish court was irresistibly drawn towards the alliance with France, though the conflict of motives gave to its policy an air of uncertainty, weakness, and dissimulation. Its boundless colonial claims had led to disputes with

England for one hundred and seventy years; that is, from the time when Englishmen planted a colony in the Chesapeake Bay, which Spain had discovered, and named, and marked as its own bay of St. Mary's. It was now perpetually agitated by a morbid and extravagant though not wholly unfounded jealousy of the good faith of British ministries; and it lived in constant dread of sudden aggression from a power with which it knew itself unable to cope alone. This instinctive fear and this mortified pride gave a value to the protecting friendship of France, and excused the wish to see the pillars of England's greatness overthrown. Besides, the occupation of Gibraltar by England made every Spaniard her enemy. To this were added the obligations of the family compact between 1777. the two crowns, of which Charles III., even while eager for a continuance of peace, was scrupulous to respect the conditions and to cherish the spirit.

Hence the government of Spain, treading stealthily in the footsteps of France, had, under the administration of Grimaldi, given money to the insurgents, but only on the condition that France should be its almoner and that its gifts should be shrouded in impenetrable secrecy. It neglected or reproved the hot zeal with which Aranda counselled war; it still suffered American ships, and even privateers with their prizes, to enter its harbors; but it assured England that every thing which could justly be complained of was done in contravention of its orders; and it listened with interest to the vague and delusive proposition of that power for a general disarming. Fertile in shifts and subterfuges, Florida Blanca sought to avoid on either hand a frank, ultimate, irrevocable decision, and evaded every thing like an agreement for an eventual war with Great Britain. His first escape from the importunity of France was by a counter proposition for the two powers to ship large re-enforcements to their colonies: a proposition which Vergennes rejected, because sending an army to the murderous climate of St. Domingo would involve all the mortality and cost of a war, with none of its benefits. Florida Blanca next advised to let Britain and her insur-

gents continue their struggle till both parties should be exhausted, and so should invite the interposition of
1777. France and Spain as mediators, who would then be able in the final adjustment to take good care of their respective interests. To this Vergennes could only reply that he knew not how the acceptance of such a mediation could be brought about; and in July he unreservedly fixed upon January or February, 1778, as the epoch when the two crowns must engage in the war, or have only to regret for ever the opportunity which they would have neglected.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ENGLAND PREPARES FOR THE CAMPAIGN OF 1777.

JANUARY—MAY, 1777.

THE year 1777 opened with a division in the British ministry on the conduct of the war; Lord North having proposed to his friends in parliament the restoration of America to the condition of 1763, some of his colleagues sought to eject him from the cabinet; and, though the intrigue failed, the policy of the Bedford party was confirmed 1777.

The conduct of the war on the side of Canada was left to Lord George Germain; within the United States, to Howe, who was supported by Lord North and the king.

Every effort was made to gain recruits for the army and navy. Threats and promises were used to induce captive American sailors to enlist in the British service. "Hang me, if you will, to the yard-arm of your ship, but do not ask me to become a traitor to my country," was the answer of Nathan Coffin; and it expressed the spirit of them all. In February, Franklin and Deane proposed to Stormont, at Paris, to exchange a hundred British seamen, taken by Wickes, of the "Reprisal," for an equal number of the American prisoners in England. To this first application Stormont was silent; to a more earnest remonstrance, in April, he answered: "The king's ambassador receives no applications from rebels, unless they come to implore his majesty's mercy."

For land forces, the hopes of the ministers rested mainly on the kinglings of Germany. The petty prince of Waldeck collected for the British service twenty men from his own territory and its neighborhood, twenty-three from Suabia, near fifty elsewhere, in all eighty-nine; and, to prevent their

desertion, locked them up in the Hanoverian fortress of Hameln. The hereditary prince of Cassel talked of difficulties and impossibilities, that he might claim the more from British gratitude for exceeding all expectations. He had a troublesome competitor in his own father, whose agents were busy in the environs of Hanau; never-
1777. theless, he furnished ninety-one recruits, and four hundred and sixty-eight additional yagers, which was fifty-six more than he had bargained for.

In Hesse-Cassel, the favor of Schlieffen, the minister, was secured by repeated gifts of money; after which, the recall of Heister was peremptorily demanded. "The king is determined upon it," were Suffolk's words. No reasons were given, but the British government had feared that foreign generals might be too "regardful of the preservation of the troops under their command," and in advance had offered rewards in money to such of them as should be found compliant; Howe had wished for no foreign officers, except captains and subalterns, and, failing in this, he had pledged himself at any rate "to gain all the service he could from troops who might avoid the loss of men." Heister was a meritorious veteran officer, unwilling to favor a disproportionate consumption of the troops under his charge. For no better reason, he was superseded by Knyphausen, and returned to his country only to die of the wound inflicted on his military pride. The land whose sons he would have spared was drained of men, and extraneous recruits were obtained slowly; yet, in the course of the year, by force, impressment, theft of foreigners, and other means, it furnished fourteen hundred and forty-nine. But this number, of which more than half were yagers, barely made good the losses in the campaign and at Trenton; a putrid epidemic, which at the end of the winter broke out among the Hessian grenadiers at Brunswick, in eight weeks swept away more than three hundred as able men as ever stood in the ranks of an army, and their places were not supplied.

The duke of Brunswick behaved the most shabbily of all. Of the men whom he offered, Faucitt writes: "I hardly remember to have ever seen such a parcel of miserable,

ill-looking fellows collected together." Two hundred and twenty-two were with difficulty called out and accepted; and even these were far from being wholly fit for service.

To clear himself from debts bequeathed him by his ancestors, the margrave of Brandenburg-Anspach, nephew of Frederic of Prussia, a kinsman of the king of England, expressed his eager desire to enter into the trade in soldiers; and on very moderate terms he furnished two regiments of twelve hundred men, beside a company of eighty-five yagers, all of the best quality, tall, neatly clad, handling their bright and faultless arms with dexterity, 1777. spirit, and exactness. The margrave readily promised them the full British pay, and kept his engagement with exceptional scrupulousness.

In the former year, a passage had everywhere been allowed to the subsidized troops; the enlightened mind of Germany, its scholars, its philosophers, its poets, had not yet openly revolted at the hiring of its sons to recruit armies for a war waged against the rights of man; but the universal feeling of its common people was a perpetual persuasion against enlistments, and an incentive to desertion. The subsidized princes sought for men outside of their own lands, and forced into the service not merely vagabonds and loose fellows of all kinds, but any unprotected traveller or hind on whom they could lay their hands. The British agents became sensitive to the stories that were told of them, and to "the excessive defamation" which they encountered. The rulers of the larger states felt the dignity of the empire insulted. Frederic of Prussia never disguised his disgust. The court of Vienna concerted with the elector of Mentz and the elector of Treves to throw a slur on the system. At Mentz, the yagers of Hanau who came first down the Rhine were stopped, and eight of them rescued by the elector's order as his subjects or soldiers. From the troops of the landgrave of Hesse, eighteen were removed by the commissaries of the ecclesiastical prince of Treves. At Coblentz, Metternich, the active young representative of the court of Vienna, in the name of Maria Theresa and Joseph II., reclaimed their subjects and deserters.

Still more formidable was the rankling discontent of the enlisted men. The regiments of Anspach could not be trusted to carry ammunition or arms, but were driven by a company of trusty yagers well provided with both, and ready to nip a mutiny in the bud. Yet eighteen or twenty succeeded in deserting. When the rest reached their place of embarkation at Ochsenfurt on the Main, the regiment of Bayreuth began to march away and hide themselves in some vineyards. The yagers, who were picked marksmen, were ordered to fire among them, by which some of them were killed. They avenged themselves by putting a yager to death. The margrave of Anspach, summoned by express, rode to the scene in the greatest haste, leaving his watch on his table, and without a shirt to change. The presence of him who by the superstitions of childhood and hallowed traditions was their land's father overawed them; they acknowledged their fault, and submitted to his severe reprimands. Four of them he threw into irons, and ordered all to the boats. Assuming in person the office of driver, he marched them through Mentz in defiance of the elector; administered the oath of fidelity to the king of England at Nymwegen; and the land's father never left his post till, at the end of March, in the presence of Sir Joseph Yorke, his children, whose service he had sold, were delivered by him in person on board the British transports at S'cravendell. "The margrave brought the men on board him-
1777. self, went through the ships with them, marked their beds, gave out every order which was recommended to him, and saw it executed, with but little assistance, indeed, from his own officers."

The whole number of recruits and re-enforcements obtained from Germany amounted to no more than thirty-five hundred and ninety-six. It is noticeable that they all came from Protestant principalities; for the landgrave of Hesse, though a Roman convertite, can hardly pass for a Catholic prince. Besides, the British government from its constitution preferred the employment of Protestants in the army, as well as in all other departments.

A large contribution had been expected from the duke of

Würtemberg, who had been in England in search of a contract; and his agent in London offered three thousand men. At Stuttgart, alluring civilities were lavished on the British envoy; but he was on his guard. The duke, who confidently renewed his offer, had for many years given himself so exclusively to effeminate amusements that every branch of his government had fallen into decay. He had neither money nor credit. Almost the whole of his regiments were but the wrecks of the last war, too decrepit and stiff for further service; the few effective men were watching a chance to desert, for he had cheated them out of their bounty on enlisting, left their pay in arrears, and forced them to remain after their engagement had expired. "The inability of the duke to supply any troops was soon discovered, and the idea, though not without great disappointment, laid aside." The British ministers searched Germany far and near for more men; "but the Catholic princes of the empire discouraged the service;" and the king of Prussia set himself against it. The excellent little army of the duke of Saxe-Gotha was coveted in vain; the landgrave of Darmstadt was too fond of his soldiers to let them go out of his sight; there was no hope but from the half-crazy prince of Anhalt-Zerbst, and with him the king's ambassador at the Hague opened a correspondence. The young profligate caught with avidity at the overture, which found him engaged with three other princes of his family on a hunting expedition. They had billeted six hundred dogs upon the citizens of Dessau; entranced by the occasion, he wrote in strange French: "Beautiful garrison! and at the first sound of the whip or the hunting-horn, the dogs came together like troops at the beat of the drum. Devil! if we could run down the Americans like that, it would not be bad." He did not know that the wild huntsman of revolution was soon to wind his bugle, and run down these princely dealers in men. 1777.

In narrating these events, I have followed exclusively the letters and papers of the princes and ministers who took part in the transactions. They prove the law, which all induction confirms, that the transmission of uncontrolled

power, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, inevitably develops corruptness and depravity. The despotism of man over man is what no succession of generations can be trusted with; it brings a curse on whatever family receives it.

All the German levies except the Brunswick and Hanau recruits and four companies of Hanau yagers, which went to Quebec, were used to re-enforce the army under Howe.

1777. From Great Britain and Ireland, the number of men who sailed for New York before the end of the year was three thousand two hundred and fifty-two; for Canada, was seven hundred and twenty-six.

This scanty supply of troops was eked out by enlistments in America, in which numerous and ever increasing recruiting stations for the British army were established. In this undertaking, Tryon was the favorite general officer of Germain; but offers for raising regiments were accepted by Howe from every one whose success seemed probable. In a few months, Delancey of New York had enlisted about six hundred, and Cortland Skinner of New Jersey more than five hundred men. In the course of the winter, commissions were issued for imbodying six thousand five hundred men in thirteen battalions; and before the end of May more than half the promised complement was obtained. Loyalists boasted that as many soldiers from the states were taken into the pay of the crown as of the continental congress; and the boast, though grossly exaggerated, had some plausible foundation. But of those in the United States who entered the service of the king only a small proportion were natives of America. The service of two thousand French Canadians was called for and expected.

The deficiency was to be supplied by the employment of the largest possible number of savages. To this Germain gave his closest attention, issuing his instructions with eager zeal and almost ludicrous minuteness of detail. Nor did he act alone; "after considering every information that could be furnished, the king gave particular directions for every part of the disposition of the forces in Canada." It was their hope to employ bands of wild warriors along all the

frontier. Carleton had checked their excesses by placing them under agents of his own appointment, and by confining them within the limits of his own command. His scruples gave offence, and his merciful precautions were swept away. The king's peremptory orders were sent to the north-west, to "extend operations;" and among those whose "inclination for hostilities" was no more to be restrained, were enumerated "the Ottawas, the Chippewas, the Wyandots, the Shawnees, the Senecas, the Delawares, and the Pottawatomies." Joseph Brant, the Mohawk, returned from his interview with the secretary, to rouse his countrymen to clamor for war under leaders of their own, who would indulge them in their excesses and take them wherever they wished to go. Humane British and German officers in Canada were alarmed at the crowds of red men who were ready to take up the hatchet if they could but have their own way, foresaw and deplored the effects of their unrestrained and useless cruelty, and from such allies augured no good to the service. But the policy of Germain was unexpectedly promoted by the release of La Corne Saint-Luc, who came in advance to meet his wishes. This most ruthless of partisans was now in his sixty-sixth year, but full of vigor and animal spirits, and only more passionate and relentless from age. He had vowed eternal vengeance on "the beggars" who had kept him captive. He stood ready to pledge his life and his honor that, within sixty days of his landing at Quebec, he would lead the Indians to the neighborhood of Albany. His words were:

"We must let loose the savages upon the frontiers of these scoundrels, to inspire terror, and to make them submit;" and his promises, faithfully reported to Germain, won favor to the leader who above all others was notorious for brutal inhumanity. 1777.

Relying on his Indian mercenaries to spread such terror by their raids as to break up the communications between Albany and Lake George, the secretary, in concert with Burgoyne, drew out in fullest particularity the plan of the northern campaign. They both refused to admit the possibility of any insurmountable obstacle to the triumphant

march of the army from Canada to Albany and New York. To put success beyond all doubt, Saint-Leger was selected by the king to conduct an expedition by way of Lake
1777. Ontario for the capture of Fort Stanwix and the Mohawk valley; the regular troops that were to form his command were precisely specified, and orders were given for the thousand savages who were to serve with him to rally at Niagara.

Such were the preparations which Germain assured the house of commons were sufficient to finish the war in the approaching campaign. When he heard of the disasters at Trenton and Princeton, and the evacuation of New Jersey, he wisely concluded that Howe ought to be removed; designing to intrust the army in Canada to Sir Henry Clinton, and the chief command in New York to Burgoyne, who was seeking his "patronage and friendship" by assurances of "a solid respect and sincere personal attachment." But the king withheld his consent; Howe was therefore left master of his part of the campaign; and Burgoyne, with a full knowledge of what was expected of him, ardently undertook the expedition from Canada.

As war measures, parliament in February authorized the grant of letters of permission to private ships to make prizes of American vessels; and, by an act which described American privateersmen as pirates, it suspended the writ of habeas corpus with regard to prisoners taken on the high seas.

The congress of the United States had neither credit nor power to tax; it proposed a lottery and a loan in Europe, and fell back upon issues of more paper money. Lord North had for his supplies new taxes, new exchequer bills, a profitable lottery, new excise duties, a floating debt of five millions sterling, and a loan of five millions more. The timid feared the swift coming of national bankruptcy; but the resources of England grew more rapidly than the most hopeful anticipated; and, while the rising influence of the people saved her liberties, the labors, inventions, and discoveries of untitled genius, of Wedgwood, Watt, Arkwright, Harrison, Brindley, and Priestley, increased her wealth faster than her aristocratic government could waste it away.

Public opinion still supported the government, under the hope of a speedy end of the war. The clergy were foremost in zeal; in a sermon before the Society for Propagating the Gospel, Markham, the archbishop of York, not doubting the conquest of the colonies, reflected on "the ideas of savage liberty" in America, and recommended a reconstruction of their governments on the principle of complete subordination to Great Britain. "These," cried Chatham, "are the doctrines of Atterbury and Sacheverell." They were the doctrines of James II. and of Thurlow.

Some voices in England pleaded for the Americans. The war with them, so wrote Edmund Burke to the sheriffs of Bristol, is "fruitless, hopeless, and unnatural;" and the Earl of Abingdon added, "on the part of Great Britain, cruel and unjust." "Our force," replied Fox to Lord North, "is not equal to conquest; and America cannot be brought over by fair means, while we insist on taxing her." Burke harbored a wish to cross the channel and seek an interview with Franklin; but the friends of Rockingham disapproved the idea. Near the end of April, Hartley went to Paris as an informal agent to speak with Franklin of peace and reunion, and received for answer that England could never conciliate the Americans but by conceding their independence. "We are the aggressors," said Chatham, on the thirtieth of May, in the house of lords; "instead of exacting unconditional submission from the colonies, we ought to grant them unconditional redress. Now is the crisis, before France is a party. Whenever France or Spain enter into a treaty of any sort with America, Great Britain must immediately declare war against them, even if we have but five ships of the line in our ports; and such a treaty must and will shortly take place, if pacification be delayed." 1777.

This advice of Chatham was rejected by the vote of nearly four fifths of the house. But, with all her resources, England labored under insuperable disadvantages. She had involved herself in the contest by a violation of the essential principle of English liberty; and her chief minister wronged his own convictions in continuing the war. It began, moreover, to be apparent that France would join in the struggle.

CHAPTER XIX.

AMERICA BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN.

MARCH—MAY, 1777.

SIR WILLIAM HOWE, while as yet he had gained nothing but New York with its environs, asked for a re-enforcement of but fifteen thousand men, with which he was to recover a country more than a thousand miles long. On the acquisition of Aquidneck Island and of New Jersey as far as Trenton, he led Lord George Germain to believe that the capture of Philadelphia would bring back the people of Pennsylvania to their allegiance. After the defeat at Trenton, he bore his mishaps very lightly, owned his need of twenty thousand men, and waited indolently for a reply to his requisition.

During the interval, attempts at a pacification were renewed. General Charles Lee, for whom congress and Washington intervened, sending him money, threatening retaliation if he were to be treated as a deserter, and offering six Hessian field-officers for his exchange, escaped from danger by a way of his own. Imprisoned as a deserter, with a halter in view, he did what two years before those who knew him best had foretold: he deserted back again. Assuring his captors that independence was declared against his advice, he volunteered to negotiate the return of the colonies to their old allegiance. With the sanction of the Howes, on the tenth of February, he addressed to congress a written request that two or three gentlemen might be sent to him immediately to receive his communication; and in private letters he conjured his friends, Rush, Robert Morris, and Richard Henry Lee, "to urge the compliance with his request as of the last importance to

1777. Feb. 10.

himself and to the public." In congress it was argued that a deputation for the manifest purpose of negotiation would spread through the country and Europe the idea that they were preparing to return to their old connection with England; and therefore, on the twenty-first, they resolved that "it was altogether improper to send any of their body to communicate with him." There were not wanting men in the army who "not only censured him bitterly, but even insinuated that he was treacherous."

The British commissioners, having failed in their attempt on congress, looked next to Washington. The unhappy American captives had been locked up in close and crowded hulks and prisons, breathing a pestilential air, wretchedly clothed, ill supplied with fuel or left without it, and receiving a scanty allowance of provisions, and those of a bad quality; so that when they came out they were weak and feverish, unfit for service, and in many cases sinking under fatal maladies. Men in that condition Washington was willing to accept on parole; but he refused to exchange for them able-bodied soldiers, who had been well fed and cared for during their captivity. The subject was referred on the part of Howe to Lieutenant-colonel Walcott, on the part of Washington to Lieutenant-colonel Harrison. On the eleventh of March, during a fruitless interview of nine hours, Walcott, speaking under instructions from Howe, took occasion to say to Harrison: "What should hinder you and me, or rather what should prevent General Washington, who seems to have the power in his hands, from making peace between the two countries?" Harrison replied: "The commissioners have no other powers than what they derive under the act of parliament by which they are appointed." "Oh," said Walcott, "neither you nor I know their powers. Suppose General Washington wrote to know them? The minister has said, in the house of commons, he is willing to place the Americans as they were in 1763: suppose Washington should propose this, renouncing the absurd idea of independence, which would be your ruin?" "Why do you refuse to treat with congress?" said Harrison. "Because," answered Walcott,

1777. Mar. 11.

"it is unknown as a legal assembly to both countries. But it would be worth Washington's while to try to restore peace." Without a moment's hesitation, Harrison put aside the overture.

1777. Mar. 19. Eight days after this rebuff, Lee once more conjured congress to send two or three gentlemen to converse with him on subjects "of great importance, not only to himself, but to the community he so sincerely loved." The letter was received in Philadelphia on Mar. 28. the twenty-eighth. Men asked: "Has Lee been suffering himself to be made a paw by the Howes?" John Adams was indignant. On the twenty-ninth, congress "still judged it improper to send any of their members to confer with General Lee."

This vote of congress fell upon the day on which Lee signalized his perfidy by presenting to the brothers a plan for reducing the Americans. These are some of his words: "I think myself bound in conscience to furnish all the lights I can to Lord and General Howe. I shall most sincerely and zealously contribute all in my power to an accommodation. To bring matters to a conclusion, it is necessary to unhinge or dissolve the whole system or machine of resistance, or, in other terms, congress government. I assert with the penalty of my life, if the plan is fully adopted, in less than two months from the date of the proclamation of pardon not a spark of this desolating war remains unextinguished in any part of the continent." At the same time he wrote to Washington in forms of affection, and asked commiseration as one whom congress had wronged. The plan of Lee, who advised to retain New Jersey and advance to Philadelphia by land, was treated with neglect by the British commanders; so that it has no historical importance, except as it convicts its author of shameless hypocrisy and treasonable intention.

Notwithstanding an order from the minister to ship Lee to Great Britain, he remained in America; the government was assured by Sir Joseph Yorke, who understood him well, that his capture was to be regretted; "that it was impossible but he must puzzle every thing he meddled in;

that he was the worst present the Americans could receive; that the only stroke like officers which they had struck happened after his being made prisoner." As a consequence, after some delay, Lee was deemed a prisoner of war, and leave was given by the king for his exchange. Meantime, before he was exchanged, he received from British officers, according to his own account, eleven hundred guineas, in return, as he pretended, for his drafts on England.

Just at the moment when the Howes were aiming at reconciliation by an amnesty, they received Germain's letter of the fourteenth of January, in which their former offers of pardon were approved with a coldness which rebuked their clemency, and the instruction was given: "At the expiration of the period limited in your proclamation, it will be incumbent upon you to use the powers with which you are intrusted, in such a manner that those persons who shall have shown themselves undeserving of the royal mercy may not escape that punishment which is due to their crimes, and which it will be expedient to inflict for the sake of example to futurity." General Howe was not sanguinary, though, from his neglect, merciless cruelties were inflicted by his subordinates; Lord Howe had accepted office from real good-will to America and England, not as the agent of Germain's vengeful passions; and, on the twenty-fifth of March, the brothers answered: "Are we required to withhold his majesty's general pardon, even though the withholding of such general pardon should prevent a speedy termination of the war?" 1777. Mar. 9. Mar. 25.

Howe had requested a re-enforcement of fifteen thousand men, in order to move simultaneously against New England, up the Hudson River, and against Pennsylvania, and thus "finish the war in one year." For the conquest of a continent the demand was certainly moderate; but Germain, intent on his expedition by way of Canada, conforming his judgment to the letters of spies and tale-bearers, or, as he called them, "of persons well informed on the spot," professed to think "that such a requisition ought not to be complied with;" at any rate, that not half that number could by any chance

be supplied. Promising but four thousand Germans, a larger number than was actually obtained, he insisted that Howe "would have an army of very nearly thirty-five thousand rank and file, so that it would still be equal to his wishes." The disingenuous statement foreshadowed a disposition to cast upon him all blame for any untoward events in the next campaign. Nor could he be ignorant of Germain's desire for the recall; nor was he indifferent to the rising fame of Burgoyne.

It was an enormous fault of the British government to require the main body of the re-enforcements destined for the army of General Howe to traverse more than two hundred leagues of a region replete with difficulties, almost desert, and of consequence very useless to take, and that only to join General Howe in the middle of the country. The scheme originated with Carleton, the governor of Quebec, who, as he entertained Howe, nursed the ambition of leading ten thousand men victoriously into the United States, and on his arrival assuming the supreme direction of the war. The project appeared very magnificent to the cabinet at London; and, though Germain overflowed with bitterness towards Carleton, the plan was saved by the fascinations of Burgoyne; but, to those who knew the country, it was stupendously defective. The general, justly indignant, took counsel with his brother, and on the second of April despatched to the secretary the final revision of his plan: "The offensive army will be too weak for rapid success. The campaign will not commence so soon as your lordship may expect. Restricted as I am by the want of forces, my hopes of terminating the war this year are vanished." Relinquishing a principal part of what he had formerly proposed, he announced his determination to evacuate the Jerseys and to invade Pennsylvania by sea. He further made known, alike to Carleton and to the secretary, that the army which was to advance from Canada would meet "with little assistance from him."

April 2.

April 5.

Germain built great expectations on the employment of ans; Howe was backward in engaging them, left all

details to the Indian agents, and scorned ambiguous messages, hints, and whispers across the Atlantic, to lay waste the country with indiscriminate cruelty.

Early in the year, a British brigade and several companies of grenadiers and light infantry were recalled from Rhode Island, and sent to Amboy. While they were on board the transport ships, Howe came over to the quarters of Cornwallis; and Washington apprehended that they would, without delay and without much difficulty, march to Philadelphia. But Howe could never take advantage of opportunities. In the middle of March, Washington's "whole number in Jersey fit for duty was under three thousand; and these, nine hundred and eighty-one excepted, were militia, who stood engaged only till the last of the month." He was moreover left without money, of which the supply was habitually tardy and inadequate, and had to complain of "the unfitness" of some of his general officers.

To gain an army, he saw no way so good as the system of drafting adopted by Massachusetts, on an equal and exact apportionment of its quota to each town in the state; in New Jersey, the theatre of war, he advised that every man able to bear arms should turn out, and that no one should be allowed to buy off his service; for, said he, "every injurious distinction between the rich and the poor ought to be laid aside now." Of the militia of New England the British commander in chief has left his testimony, that, "when brought to action, they were the most persevering of any in all North America;" and it was on the militia of those states that Washington placed his chief reliance. The want of arms was relieved by the arrival of ships freighted by Beaumarchais from the arsenals of France. 1777.

Reed, the former adjutant-general, never resumed that post, though, by assertions on his honor as disingenuous as the original ground of offence, he recovered for a time the affection of Washington. His aid as a secretary was more than made good by Alexander Hamilton, who joined the staff of the commander in chief in March, and thus obtained the precious opportunity of becoming familiar with the course of national affairs on the largest scale.

1777. In the appointment of general officers, congress gave little heed to Washington. Contrary to his opinions, in the promotions that were made, Arnold, the oldest brigadier-general, was left out, on the pretext that Connecticut had already two major-generals. The slight rankled in Arnold's breast; to Washington he complained of the wound to his "nice feelings;" to Gates he wrote:

"By heavens! I am a villain if I seek not
A brave revenge for injured honor."

On the first of March six new brigadiers were appointed. Stark stood at the head of the roll of New Hampshire, was the best officer from that state, and had shown himself great at Bunker Hill, Trenton, and Princeton; but, on the idea that he was self-willed, he was passed over. Chafing at the injustice, he retired to his freehold and his plough, where his patriotism, like the fire of the smithy when sprinkled with water, glowed more fiercely than ever.

Congress, without consulting Washington on the appointment of his chief of staff, "earnestly solicited Gates to reassume the office of adjutant-general with his present rank and pay," "in confidence that he would retrieve the state of the army, and place it on a respectable footing." The thought crossed his mind to secure in the bargain a provision for his own life, with an annuity on that of his wife or son; and as the price of his consent he demanded "something more than words." Washington offered to welcome him back; but nothing came of the offer, for the New England members, especially Samuel Adams, were resolved on raising him to the command of the northern department.

Beside the jealousies among officers which grew out of the wish for promotion, subordinate generals importuned Washington for separate commands; and those who were detached were never contented with their fair share of materials and men. "Let me know who were your informers," wrote Heath, on receiving a merited admonition. Sullivan fretted at an imaginary slight, and demanded an explanation. "Five hundred men is all that his excellency allows me," wrote Putnam to congress, from Princeton. Mifflin, ambition was divided between a career of arms and

of civil life, showed signs of groundless complaining. Washington was surrounded by officers willing to fill the ears of members of congress with clamor against his management, and counteraction of his advice.

The service had suffered from the high advance- 1777.
ment of worthless foreign adventurers, some of whom had obtained engagements from Deane at Paris. The desire to secure able veteran officers had assisted to blind the judgment of congress; henceforward, it required of claimants a good knowledge of the English language and strong credentials. One emigrant from Northern Europe stood conspicuous for modesty and sound judgment, the Pole, Kosciuszko. He left his native country from a disappointment in love; and, devoting himself to freedom and humanity, in the autumn of 1776 he entered the American army as an officer of engineers. This year the public service carried him to Ticonderoga.

Before the end of March, Greene was sent to Philadelphia to explain the pressing wants of the army. By his suggestion, the instructions of the commander in chief were modified: henceforward, he, as well as the chief officer in every department, was permitted, not required, to consult the general officers under him; and it was made his duty, regardless of the majority of voices, "finally to direct every measure according to his own judgment." The helplessness of congress appeared more and more; with the fate of the country dependent on the campaign, their authority did not reach beyond a series of recommendations "to the executive powers and legislatures of each of the United States;" and, in case voluntary enlistment should prove insufficient, they "advised each state to cause indiscriminate drafts from their respective militia." One attempt, and only one, was made to exert a temporary control over a state. The legislature of Pennsylvania had adjourned; the inadequateness of the executive authority menaced danger, "not only to the safety of the said commonwealth, but to the general welfare of the United States:" congress therefore, with promises of its own co-operation, directed the president and council of Pennsylvania, with its army and navy boards, to

"exercise every authority to promote the safety of the state," till the legislature could be convened.

To the command of the forts in the Highlands on the Hudson George Clinton was appointed with the concurrence of New York, of congress, and of Washington. In the northern department, the utmost confusion grew out of the rivalry between Schuyler and Gates. The former loved his country more than his own rank or fortune; the thoughts of the latter centred in himself. The emergency required a general of high ability, and to such a one Schuyler would have gladly given way; but he was unwilling to be
1777. supplanted by an intriguer of inferior rank to himself. Gates, who was hovering round congress, and boasting of his repulse of Carleton, refused to serve at Ticonderoga as a subordinate. On the fifteenth of March, congress censured an objurgatory letter from Schuyler; and ten days later, without consulting the commander in chief, they directed Gates "to repair immediately to Ticonderoga, and take command of the army there."

Elated with his advancement to an independent command, which in importance was second only to that of the grand army, he quickly forgot that he had a superior; and he took upon himself, by sturdy and confident importunity with congress, to direct the stationing of the forces under Washington, as well as of his own. Yet his appointment did not bring out the troops of New England; and congress found no resource but to direct "General Washington to write to the eastern states."

Washington, after proper inquiry, had from the first compared Fort Independence, opposite Ticonderoga, on the east side of Lake Champlain, to a mill built on a beautiful site to which water could not be brought; "the enemy might pass that post and get into Lake George, without receiving the least annoyance;" but congress, this time led by the opinions of Schuyler, voted permission to Gates to evacuate "Ticonderoga, on the west of Lake Champlain, and apply his whole force to securing Fort Independence and the water-defences of Lake George." Seizing the opportunity of gaining an advantage in the opinion of congress over

Schuyler, Gates answered: "I see no reason for abandoning any part of the post;" "I am not the least apprehensive there will be occasion to surrender one acre we possess."

Gates, who wished to shape every movement in aid of his command, wrote to Hancock: "I foresee the worst of consequences from too great a proportion of the main army being drawn into the Jerseys. Request con- 1777.
gress in my name to order two troops of horse to Albany." And congress directed Washington to "forward two troops of horse to General Gates."

Washington thought that the requisitions of Gates should be made directly to himself, or that at least he should receive a duplicate of them; but Gates insisted on dealing directly with congress, as "the common parent of all the American armies."

To a petulant requisition for tents, Washington explained why there was a scarcity of them, and how he had distributed military stores without partiality. At this, Gates, complaining of "George Washington," and "how little he had to expect from him," wrote to Lovell, a New England member of congress: "Generals, like parsons, are all for christening their own child first; let an impartial moderating power decide between us."

But, before this appeal could be received, Gates lost his short independent command. Angry that his department had been curtailed, Schuyler in the second week of April took his seat in congress, to complain in person and assert his right to be replaced. According to his statement, Ticonderoga had been put into a strong and nearly impregnable condition while he had the command in chief, with Gates as his junior; his measures for the supply and maintenance of the post were in full operation, and left no doubt of its future safety, for which he was willing to take on himself the responsibility. His opponents were powerful; on the third of May he announced to Washington his intention "to resign his commission;" and Washington interposed no dissuasions. But having Duane as a skilful manager, instead of a resignation, Schuyler apologized to congress for words that had given offence; a committee which had

at his request inquired into his use of the public money relieved him from injurious rumors; and on the re-
1777. port of the board of war, after a discussion protracted into the fourth day, an accidental majority assured him the undivided command of Albany, Ticonderoga, Fort Stanwix, and their dependencies.

Schuyler eagerly accepted the trust. Nearly half congress doubted his capacity, and had resisted his appointment; he made himself answerable for failure by his assurances that his means for defending Ticonderoga were adequate; and he had to encounter the invincible and not wholly unreasonable want of confidence of the New England troops. Besides, Gates was sure to decline other employment, and to renew his intrigues.

This long dispute aggravated the disorder in the northern department; but with unselfish and untiring zeal Washington strove to repair the errors and defects of congress. From the weakness of its powers it would justly escape reprehension, if its members had unanimously given him support; but they refused to contemplate the difficulty with which he had kept "the life and soul of his army together," or to own that he had saved their cause, for it would have been an indirect censure on themselves for having rejected his solicitations for the formation of a permanent army at the time when such an army could have been raised. Assuming the style of conquerors, they did not and they would not perceive the true situation of affairs; they were vexed that the commander in chief insisted on bringing it to their attention; and, as if Washington had not adventured miracles of daring, Samuel Adams and others were habitually impatient for more enterprise, that the enemy might be beaten in detail before re-enforcements should arrive. Thus they discoursed, when no men had as yet joined him from the eastward, and there was great danger that Howe would open the campaign before the American army could be in any condition to oppose him. Washington bore their unjust reproaches with meekness and dignity, never forgetting the obedience and respect that were due to congress as his civil superior and the representative of all the states.



He valued not rumors above the public safety; this is the man who tired out evil tongues and evil fortune, and saved his country by boldness, constancy, and the 1777. gain of time. Desiring the good opinion of his kind as his sole reward, his cheerful fortitude never failed him; and he saw in his mind that posterity was his own.

CHAPTER XX.

THE BRITISH EVACUATE NEW JERSEY.

MARCH—JULY, 1777.

OF his greatly superior force the British general made little use. Stores for the American army had been deposited at Peekskill, where, in the absence of Heath, Macdougall was in command of two hundred and fifty men. On the twenty-third of March the English landed in the bay with twice his number, compelling Macdougall to burn the magazine and draw back to the hills; but with Willett, whom he called from Fort Constitution, he repulsed an advanced party. The British, having completed the work of destruction and burnt the wharf, retired to their boats at evening, and under the light of the full moon sailed down the river. The result was unimportant; there was old wheat enough in the state of New York to supply the army for a year.

1777, March.

While Howe was wasting the spring at New York, Cornwallis at Brunswick grew weary of inactivity, and came out in force early in the morning of the thirteenth of April to surprise Lincoln, now a major-general, who, with five hundred men, occupied Boundbrook. Through the carelessness of the guard, he came very near effecting his design; Lincoln by a prompt retreat gained the hill in the rear of the town, but with the loss of two cannon, two lieutenants, and twenty men. After a stay of an hour and a half, the assailants returned to Brunswick, and Lincoln with a stronger party reoccupied his post.

Apr. 13.

On the twenty-third of April, a detached corps of eighteen hundred men, drafted from different regiments, and a small number of dragoons, sailed from New

Apr. 23.

York, under convoy, to destroy the stores which the Americans had collected in Danbury, Connecticut, at a distance, as the roads then ran, of more than twenty miles from the sound. The leader of the expedition was Tryon, now a major-general of provincials; but Sir William Howe prudently appointed General Agnew and Sir William Erskine to assist him. On Friday the twenty-fifth, 1777. Apr. 25. they landed at Compo, near Saugatuck River; and, marching seven miles that evening, they reached Danbury about three hours after noon on Saturday. They had excellent guides, and from the suddenness of the enterprise encountered little opposition on the way or at Danbury, where the guard under Huntington was composed of but fifty continentals and a few militia. The English, under a heavy rain, destroyed the stores, among which the loss of nearly seventeen hundred tents was irreparable; and all night long they were busy in burning down the village. By this time the people in the neighboring towns were in motion; and the invading party, though they returned by a different route, were compelled to retreat hastily, like the expedition to Concord in 1775. Apr. 26.

By a quick march, Arnold and Silliman confronted them on Sunday at Ridgefield with four hundred men, while two hundred more hung on their rear under Wooster, who encouraged his troops by his words and his example, and fell at their head, mortally wounded, yet not till he had taken twenty or more prisoners. Arnold, having thrown up a barrier across the road, sustained a sharp action till the British, by their superior numbers, turned his position. His horse being killed under him just as the enemy were within a few yards, a soldier, seeing him alone and entangled, advanced on him with fixed bayonet; Arnold drew a pistol, shot the soldier, and retired unhurt. Apr. 27.

At the wane of the day, the British troops, worn out with hard service, formed themselves into an oblong square, and lay on their arms till morning. At daybreak on Monday they resumed their march, and were assailed from stone walls and hiding-places. A Apr. 28.

part of Lamb's battalion of artillery, with three companies of volunteers from New Haven, and sixty continentals, were strongly posted at the bridge over the Saugatuck, while Arnold and Silliman held ground about two miles above the bridge. The British escaped this danger only by fording the river a mile above them all, and running at full speed to the high hill of Compo, within half a mile of the shipping. For three days and nights they had had little rest, and several of them dropped on the road from fatigue. To protect the embarkation, Erskine put himself at the head of the most able of the detachment and fresh men from the ships. Here Lamb was wounded; and here Arnold again braved the enemy's musketry and grape-shot, and again his horse was struck, but its rider escaped as before. The Americans could not stand the charge of Erskine, and before night the English set sail. The number of their killed, wounded, and prisoners, is estimated at about two hundred; the Americans lost not half so many.

Congress, who at Washington's instance had elected Arnold a major-general, voted him "a horse, caparisoned, as a token of their approbation of his gallant conduct;" but they refused to restore him to his former relative rank, so that a sense of wrong still rankled in his breast. Wooster lingered a few days, and died with calmness, gloriously ending a long and honorable life. Congress voted him a monument.

The Americans had better success in a like undertaking. Return Meigs of Connecticut, learning through General Parsons that the British were lading transports at Sag Harbor, on the east side of the great bay of Long Island, crossed the sound from Sachem's Head on the twenty-third of May, with two hundred continentals, in whale-boats. From the north beach of the island they carried their boats on their backs over the sandy point, embarked again on the bay, and landed after midnight within four miles of Sag Harbor. To that place they advanced before daybreak in silence and order, burned one vessel of six or eight guns, and ten loaded transports, destroyed the stores that lay at the wharf, killed five

1777. May 23.

May 24.

or six of the British, and with little opposition captured all the rest but four. On their return, they reached Guilford with ninety prisoners at two in the afternoon, having traversed by land and water ninety miles in twenty-five hours.* Congress voted Meigs a sword, and Washington promoted Sergeant Ginnings for merit in the expedition.

During the period of his listless indolence, Howe received letters from his government dated the third of March, after the news of the disasters in New Jersey had reached England. Germain, whom disappointment made more and more vengeful, expressed his extreme mortification that the brilliancy of Howe's successes had thus been tarnished, adding: "They who insolently refuse to accept the mercy of their sovereign cannot, in the eye of impartial reason, have the least room to expect clemency at the hand of his subjects; I fear you and Lord Howe must adopt such modes of carrying on the war that the rebels may be effectually distressed, so that through a lively experience of losses and sufferings they may be brought as soon as possible to a proper sense of their duty." The secretary longed to hear that Boston was in flames; he communicated the king's opinion, that in conjunction with the fleet "a warm diversion" should be made "upon the coasts of the Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire," and their ports be occupied or "destroyed." The admiral had not come to America to "distress" and "destroy;" he would not hearken to the hint to burn Boston and the other seaside towns of New England; and, after a delay of more than three weeks, the general on the third of June made answer that "it was not consistent with other operations." 1777. May. June 3.

Hitherto the letters of Sir William Howe to his superior had been decorous: to the minute and elaborate directions of the secretary, addressed through him to the Indian agent, on the employment of the savages of the south and south-west against the frontiers of the southern states, he replied with undisguised contempt and sneers. In his talk to the head men and warriors of the south-west, of which a copy was sent to Germain, he accepted with pleasure the white

wing from the Chickasaws and Choctaws as the emblem of love, the painted hatchet from the Creeks as the token of fidelity; but, while he was profuse of kind words and presents, he never urged "the red children of the great king" to deeds of blood. His discontent with the ministry at once became known in Europe; and Frederic of Prussia considered it a proof that the general himself looked upon the state of affairs in America as so critical that he was unwilling to remain in command. Nor did any sentiment of patriotism raise General Howe above himself and the influences around him. From Lord North's office he received the kindest attention and assurances of support; but not the love of his country, not respect for his sovereign, not fear of public opinion, not the certainty that a war with France would follow a fruitless campaign, could quicken the sluggish nature of the obstinate commander. He had squandered away two of the best months for activity in the field; he now deliberately wasted the month of June.

1777. June. There was no force that could seriously oppose his march to Philadelphia; yet he clung to his plan of reaching that city by water, while he continually postponed his embarkation.

May 28. On the twenty-eighth of May, Washington removed his quarters from Morristown to the heights of Middlebrook. His army was composed of no more than seven thousand five hundred men in forty-three regiments, distributed into five divisions of two brigades each. Sullivan, his oldest major-general, with about fifteen hundred men, was stationed at Princeton, while he retained about six thousand in his well-chosen mountain camp. Of this the front was protected by the Raritan, then too deep to be forded; the left was by nature difficult of access; and the right, where the ground was not good, was protected by two strong redoubts. Here, at a distance of about nine miles from Brunswick, he kept watch of his enemy,

June. who put on the appearance of opening the campaign. Two more regiments came up from Rhode Island; horses, tents, stores, re-enforcements, arrived [illegible] land; Lee was put on board the "Centurion"

for security; and, by the twelfth of June, British, Hessians, and Anspachers, to the number of seventeen thousand, with boats and pontoons for crossing the Delaware, were assembled at Brunswick. The veteran officers, alike German and English, agreed that they had never seen such a body of men. Every soldier was eager for a battle.

It was Howe's purpose, so far as he had any beyond getting rid of time, to throw his army between Washington and Princeton, and by a swift march to cut off the division under Sullivan. Orders were given for the troops to move from Brunswick at eleven in the night, 1777. June 13. leaving their tents, baggage, and boats behind. A tardiness of five hours enabled Sullivan to retire to the Delaware. He should have been pursued; but Howe, after marching in two columns about three miles on the road to Princeton, turned suddenly to the right to Somerset court-house. His first column under Cornwallis advancing to Hillsborough, the second under Heister to Middlebush, they occupied below the mountains a fine country for a battle-field. On the fourteenth, about the hour June 14. when the two armies first confronted each other, congress "resolved that the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." The fortitude of Washington in his camp at Middlebrook was the salvation of that flag. The guard of the line of the Delaware was intrusted to Arnold, with such force as he could rally; Sullivan was recalled from his retreat, and stationed at Sourland hills, within six miles of Somerset court-house, where he was strengthened by continentals and Pennsylvania militia, and by the uprising of the men of New Jersey. During these days, Washington was almost constantly in the saddle; by night his men slept on their arms; in the morning they were arrayed for battle; but Howe dared not adventure an attack, and he could only throw up fortifications which he was to leave behind. He was of too coarse a nature to feel keenly the shame of his position; but his army murmured.

At that time, the cares of the northern department were thrown upon the American commander in chief; and Schuyler besieged him with entreaties to supply his wants and remedy all that was going wrong. It is strange that men in and round congress fretted at Washington's caution; yet at the time when his prudence was saving the country from ruin, when to have crossed the river with his small and ill-provided force was just what Howe desired, one general officer wrote: "We must fight or forfeit our honor;" 1777. June 18. and on the eighteenth Samuel Adams thus complained: "I confess I have always been so very wrong-headed as not to be over-well pleased with what is called the Fabian war in America." When Washington heard of these reproaches, he answered: "We have some amongst us, and I dare say generals, who wish to make themselves popular at the expense of others, or who think the cause is not to be advanced otherwise than by fighting; the peculiar circumstances under which it is to be done, and the consequences which may follow, are objects too trivial for their attention; but, as I have one great object in view, I shall steadily pursue the means which in my judgment leads to the accomplishment of it, not doubting but that the candid part of mankind, if they are convinced of my integrity, will make proper allowance for my inexperience and frailties. I will agree to be loaded with all the obloquy they can bestow, if I commit a wilful error." With undisturbed self-possession, he continued to hold in check and completely baffle an enemy of much more than twice his num-June 19. bers. On the nineteenth, Howe returned to Brunswick. Washington watched to see if he would take June 20. the road to the Delaware; and when, on the twentieth, his army at Middlebrook learned that the whole British force was returning to Amboy, the surrounding country even as far as Brunswick rung at evening with their salvos and shouts.

June 21. On the twenty-first, Washington, who hoped to cut off the rear-guard of the British, sent orders to Maxwell to lie with a strong party between Brunswick and and to Sullivan to join his division to Greene, who

was advanced with three brigades; while the main body of the army were paraded upon the heights within supporting distance. But Sullivan came too late; the 1777. June 22. express sent off to Maxwell never reached him; and Greene's party was left to act alone. At four o'clock in the morning of the twenty-second, Heister, who was on the north side of the Raritan, began his march to Amboy; his rear, consisting of the Anspach and Hessian yagers, was much cut up by a body of about three hundred men; the corps of Cornwallis, which slept in Brunswick, could not move so rapidly, for it had to cross the Raritan by a narrow bridge. Near the end of the bridge, Howe stood on high ground with his staff, to see the troops pass by; they were gloomy and sullen at the thought of a retreat. A battery of three heavy cannon which Greene mounted on a hill was too distant to be effective. When more than half the column of Cornwallis had passed Piscataway, his patrols on the left were fiercely set upon by Morgan's riflemen, and driven back upon the column. Howe instantly put himself at the head of the two nearest regiments to meet the attack. For a half-hour the rifle corps fought within the distance of forty yards; nor did they retire till he ordered up heavy artillery and scoured the woods with grape. There at least thirty, several of the officers thought more than a hundred, of the British fell. Soon after this encounter, a strong body of the Americans was discovered in the distance; lest they should boast of his rapid flight before them, Howe arrayed the rear-guard and a part of the corps of Cornwallis on a small oval plain, and offered battle. The rest of the march to Amboy was unobstructed.

Having taken the advice of his general officers, whose opinion that the British army had gone off panic-struck he did not share, Washington on the twenty- June 24. fourth came down with the main body of his army as far as Quibbletown, and advanced Lord Stirling's division with some other troops to Matouchin, to act according to circumstances, but in no event to bring on a general engagement. Informed of this movement, Howe June 25. conceived the hope of getting in Washington's rear.

Recalling the German battalions which had crossed to Staten Island, at one in the morning of the twenty-sixth he marched his whole army in two columns by different roads in the direction of Scotch Plains. About eight o'clock, Maxwell, who commanded an advanced detachment, withdrew without loss. A brief hour later, Cornwallis came upon Stirling's division, in which Conway and other French officers served as volunteers. It was posted on a cleared hill in front of a forest, with six small field-pieces. Stirling, who was a brave man, but no tactician, saw fit to await an attack. His artillery began to play at the distance of a thousand yards, and his musketry fired before the British were within range. Cornwallis planted two twelve-pounders and some six-pounders on his own left to annoy Stirling's right; while Minnigerode, moving a battalion of Hessian grenadiers obliquely, turned his position and attacked his left flank. As the Hessian grenadiers came on, the Americans gave a nervous fire from a distance, and fled. The Hessians captured two brass three-pounders, which had lately arrived from France; a third was taken by the first battalion of guards. Cornwallis lost about seventy men, of whom more than half were Hessians. The Americans lost, including prisoners, full twice that number. The party of Stirling was chased as far as Westfield with little effect; there the heat of the day and the fatigue of his men compelled Cornwallis to give up the pursuit. The column which Howe accompanied accomplished nothing; Washington had retired to the heights of Middlebrook.

1777. June 26.

June 27, 28. June 30. In the two next days the British troops returned through Rahway to Amboy, and were rapidly transferred to Staten Island; on the thirtieth, Howe evacuated New Jersey, never again to step his foot on its soil. A great victory on the part of the Americans would not have given a deadlier blow to British supremacy. As at Boston the refugees sailed away with the army, so now Jersey men who had accepted British protection flocked to Staten Island.

July 4. In Philadelphia toryism had stalked abroad fearlessly, and in May a clergyman had publicly read

prayers for the king; the nearness of danger now ef[illegible] a coalition of parties; the unexpectedly spirited manner [illegible] which the militia of Pennsylvania turned out gave a shock to the enemy; and the American congress could celebrate the first anniversary of independence with a feeling of security and triumph. The bells rung all day and all the evening; the ships and row-galleys and boats showed the flag of the nation; at one o'clock the ships in the stream were manned. At three there was a dinner, attended by the members of congress and officers of the government of Pennsylvania. "Our country" was on the lips of every one; "the heroes who have fallen" were commemorated; the Hessian band, captured at Trenton, played excellent music. Afterwards there were military parades, and at night bonfires, fireworks, and a general illumination.

All the while, Howe was getting in readiness for a voyage, and shipping his army, amidst the half-suppressed murmurs of his officers, whose chagrin was soon sharpened by the success of a daring adventure. Prescott, the commander of the British forces on Rhode Island, had his quarters at a lonely farm-house about four miles from Newport, on the west side of the island, a mile from any troops, with no patrols along the shore, and no protection but a sentry and the guard-ship in the bay. Hearing of this, William Barton, a native of Warren, then a colonel in the American army, embarked a party at Providence in two whale-boats, hid them during the day at Warwick, and on the night following the ninth of July, after the young moon had gone down, steered between the islands of Patience and Prudence, and landed at Redwood Creek. Coming up across fields, they surrounded Prescott's house, burst open the doors, took him and Lieutenant Barrington out of their beds, hurried them to the water without giving them time to put on their clothes, and, while men from the several camps were searching for their tracks on the shore, they passed under the stern of the guard-ship, which lay against Hope Island, and carried their captives to Providence. The rank of Prescott was equal to that of Lee, and Washington promptly effected an exchange.

1777. July 10.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ADVANCE OF BURGOYNE FROM CANADA.

MAY—JULY 7, 1777.

"THIS campaign will end the war," was the opinion given by Riedesel; and through Lord Suffolk he solicited
1777. the continued favor of the British king, who was in his eyes "the adoration of all the universe." Flushed with expectations of victory and glory, Carleton employed the unusually mild Canadian winter in preparations. On the last day of April he gave audience to the deputies of the Six Nations, and accepted their services with thanks and gifts. Other large bodies of Indians were engaged, under leaders of their own approval. "Wretched colonies!" said the Brunswick major-general, "if these wild souls are indulged in war."

To secure the Mohawks to the British side, Joseph Brant, their young chief, urged them to abandon their old abode for lands more remote from American settlements. To counteract his authority, Gates, near the end of May, thus spoke to a council of warriors of the Six Nations:

"Brothers, the United States are now one people; suffer not any evil spirit to lead you into war. Brothers of the Mohawks, you will be no more a people from the time you quit your ancient habitations; if there is any wretch so bad as to think of prevailing upon you to leave the sweet stream so beloved by your forefathers, he is unworthy to be called a Mohawk; he is your bitterest enemy. Before many moons pass away, the pride of England will be laid low; then, when your American brothers have no enemy to contend with, how happy will it make you to reflect that you have preserved the neutrality so earnestly recommended to you from the beginning of the war. Brothers of the Six

Nations, the Americans well know your great fame and power as warriors; the only reason why they did not ask your help against the cruelty of the king was, that they thought it ungenerous to desire you to suffer in a quarrel in which you had no concern. Brothers, treasure all I have now said in your hearts; for the day will come when you will hold my memory in veneration for the good advice contained in this speech."

The settlers in the land which this year took the name of Vermont refused by a great majority to come under the jurisdiction of New York; on the fifteenth of January, 1777, their convention declared the independence of their state. At Windsor, on the second of June, they appointed a committee to prepare a constitution; and they hoped to be received as a new member of the union. But, as New York insisted on its legal right, congress, by an uncertain majority against a large and determined minority, disclaimed the intention of recognising Vermont. 1777.

Gates, who had the good luck to be relieved just before inevitable mishaps, charged Saint-Clair to "call lustily for aid of all kinds, for no general ever lost by surplus numbers or over-preparation;" and he then repaired to Philadelphia, to secure his reinstatement.

On the twelfth, Saint-Clair, the best of the brigadiers then in the north, reached Ticonderoga. Five days later, Schuyler visited his army. Mount Defiance, which overhangs the outlet of Lake George and was the acknowledged "key of the position," was left unoccupied. From the old French intrenchments to the south-eastern works on the Vermont side, the wretchedly planned and unfinished defences extended more than two miles and a half; and from end to end of the straggling lines and misplaced blockhouses there was no spot which could be held against a superior force. The British could reach the place by the lake more swiftly than the Americans through the forest. The only good part was to prepare for evacuating the post; but from the dread of clamor, shirking the responsibility of giving definite instructions, Schuyler returned to Albany,

and busied himself with forwarding to Ticonderoga supplies for a long siege.

1777. On the sixth of May, Burgoyne arrived at Quebec. Carleton received with amazement despatches rebuking him for his conduct of the last campaign, and ordering him, for "the speedy quelling of the rebellion," to make over to his inferior officer the command of the Canadian army, as soon as it should cross the boundary of the province of Quebec. The austere man, answering the not unjust reproaches of the secretary, and of Amherst, the secretary's counsellor, with passionate recrimination, at once yielded the chief military authority, and as civil governor paid a haughty but unquestioning obedience to the requisitions of his successor. Contracts were made for fifteen hundred horses and five hundred carts; a thousand Canadians, reluctant and prone to desertion, were called out as road-makers and wagoners; and six weeks' supplies for the army were crowded forward upon the one line of communication by the Sorel. Burgoyne had very nearly all the force which he had represented as sufficient. His officers were exceedingly well chosen, especially Phillips and Riedesel as major-generals and the Highlander Fraser as an acting brigadier. Sir William Howe was promptly notified that Burgoyne had precise orders to force a junction with the army in New York.

A diversion, from which great consequences were expected, was to proceed by way of Lake Ontario to the Mohawk River, while, on the fifteenth of June, Burgoyne advanced from St. John's, as he thought, to easy victories and high promotion. Many officers' wives attended their husbands, promising themselves an agreeable trip to New York.

On the twentieth, some of the Indians, shedding the first blood, brought in ten scalps and as many prisoners. The next day, at the camp near the river Bouquet, a little north of Crown Point, Burgoyne met in congress about four hundred Iroquois, Algonkin, and Ottawa savages. Pleased with the opportunity for display, he appealed "to their wild honor" in phrases elaborately prepared:

"Chiefs and warriors, the great king, our common father, has considered with satisfaction the general conduct of the Indian tribes from the beginning of the troubles in America. The refuse of a small tribe at first were led astray, demonstrating to the world how few and 1777. how contemptible are the apostates. These pitiful examples excepted, the collective voices and hands of the Indian tribes over this vast continent are on the side of justice, of law, and of the king. The restraint you have put upon your resentment in waiting the king your father's call to arms is the hardest proof to which your affection could have been put. The further patience of your father would, in his eyes, become culpable; it therefore remains for me, the general of one of his majesty's armies, and in this council his representative, to release you from those bonds which your obedience imposed. Warriors, you are free; go forth in might of your valor and your cause; strike at the common enemies of Great Britain and America, disturbers of public order, peace, and happiness, destroyers of commerce, parricides of the state. The circle round you, the chiefs of his majesty's European forces, and of the princes, his allies, esteem you as brothers in the war; emulous in glory and in friendship, we will reciprocally give and receive examples. Be it our task to regulate your passions when they overbear. I positively forbid bloodshed, when you are not opposed in arms. Aged men, women, children, and prisoners must be held sacred from the knife and the hatchet, even in the time of actual conflict. You shall receive compensation for the prisoners you take, but you shall be called to account for scalps. Your customs have affixed an idea of honor to such badges of victory: you shall be allowed to take the scalps of the dead, when killed by your fire and in fair opposition; but on no account, or pretence, or subtlety, or prevarication, are they to be taken from the wounded or even dying; and still less pardonable will it be held to kill men in that condition, upon a supposition that this protection to the wounded would be thereby evaded. Base, lurking assassins, incendiaries, ravagers, and plunderers of the country, to whatever army they may be-

long, shall be treated with less reserve; but the latitude must be given you by order; and I must be the judge
1777. of the occasion. Should the enemy, on their part, dare to countenance acts of barbarity towards those who may fall into their hands, it shall be yours to retaliate."

An old Iroquois chief thus replied: "We receive you as our father; because, when you speak, we hear the voice of our great father beyond the great lake. We have been tried and tempted by the Bostonians; but we loved your father, and our hatchets have been sharpened upon our affections. In proof of sincerity, our whole villages, able to go to war, are come forth. The old and infirm, our infants and wives, alone remain at home. With one common assent we promise a constant obedience to all you have ordered and all you shall order; and may the Father of days give you many and success."

Having feasted the Indians according to their custom, Burgoyne ostentatiously published his speech, which reflected his instructions, but not English opinion. Edmund Burke, who had learned that the natural ferocity of those tribes far exceeded the ferocity of all barbarians mentioned in history, pronounced that they were not fit allies for the king in a war with his people; that Englishmen should never confirm their evil habits by fleshing them in the slaughter of British colonists. In the house of commons, Fox censured the king for suffering them in his camp, when it was well known that "brutality, murder, and destruction were ever inseparable from Indian warriors." When Suffolk, before the lords, contended that it was perfectly justifiable to use all the means which God and nature had put into their hands, Chatham called down "the most decisive indignation at these abominable principles and this more abominable avowal of them." At a later day, Burgoyne offered the false excuse, that "he spoke daggers, but used none." He let loose the savages whom he could not restrain.

In a proclamation issued at Crown Point, Burgoyne, claiming to speak "in consciousness of Christianity and the honor of soldiership," enforced his persuasions to the Amer-

icans by menaces like these: "Let not people consider their distance from my camp; I have but to give stretch to the Indian forces under my direction, and they amount to thousands, to overtake the hardened enemies of 1777. Great Britain. If the frenzy of hostility should remain, I trust I shall stand acquitted in the eyes of God and man in executing the vengeance of the state against the wilful outcasts."

On the last day of June, he published in general orders: "This army must not retreat;" while Saint-Clair wrote to Schuyler: "Should the enemy attack us, they will go back faster than they came." On the first of July the invading army moved up the lake. As they encamped at evening before Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, the rank and file, exclusive of Indians, numbered three thousand seven hundred and twenty-four British, three thousand and sixteen Germans, two hundred and fifty provincials, besides four hundred and seventy-three of the choicest artillerists, with the most complete supply of artillery ever furnished to such an army. On the third, one of Saint-Clair's aids promised Washington "the total defeat of the enemy;" but on that day Riedesel was studying how to invest Mount Independence. On the fourth, Phillips seized the mills near the outlet of Lake George, and hemmed in Ticonderoga on that side. In the following night, a party of infantry, following the intimation of Lieutenant Twiss of the engineers, took possession of Mount Defiance. In one day more, batteries from that hill would play on both forts, and Riedesel complete the investment of Mount Independence. "We must away," said Saint-Clair, as he awoke to the desperateness of his situation; his council of war were all of the same mind, and the retreat must be made the very next night. The garrison, according to his low estimate, consisted of thirty-three hundred men, of whom two thirds were effective, but with scarcely more than one bayonet to every tenth soldier. One regiment, the invalids, and such stores as there was time to lade, were sent in boats up the lake to Whitehall; while the great body of the troops, under Saint-Clair, with no more confusion than necessarily attended a sud-

den movement in darkness under inexperienced brigadiers, took the new road through the wilderness to Hubbardton.

1777. At daybreak on the sixth, Fraser moved swiftly upon Ticonderoga, and Riedesel occupied Fort Independence. They found ample stores of ammunition, flour, salt meat, and herds of oxen, more than seventy cannon, and what to the Americans was a most severe loss, a large number of tents. Burgoyne, who came up in the fleet, sent Fraser with twenty companies of English grenadiers, followed by Riedesel's infantry and reserve corps, in pursuit of the army of Saint-Clair; and, as soon as a passage could be cleared through the bridge that barred the channel between Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, the fleet, bearing Burgoyne and the rest of his forces, chased after the detachment which had escaped by water. The Americans, burning three of their vessels, abandoned two others and the fort at Whitehall. Every thing which they brought from Ticonderoga was destroyed, or fell a prey to their pursuers.

On the same day, Burgoyne reported to his government that the army of Ticonderoga was "disbanded and totally ruined." Lord George Germain cited to General Howe this example of "rapid progress," and predicted an early junction of the two armies. Men disputed in England whether most to admire the sword or the pen of Burgoyne. They gave him Cæsar's motto. They taunted the Americans as cowards who dared not stand before compacted Britons, and were sure of the entire conquest of the confederated provinces before Christmas.

CHAPTER XXII.

PROGRESS OF THE CAMPAIGN IN THE NORTH.

JULY—AUGUST 21, 1777.

ON the second of July, the convention of Vermont reassembled at Windsor. The organic law which they adopted, blending the gains of the eighteenth century with the traditions of Protestantism, assumed that all men are born free and with inalienable rights; that they may emigrate from one state to another, or form a new state in vacant countries; that "every sect should observe the Lord's Day, and keep up some sort of religious worship;" that every man may choose that form of religious worship "which shall seem to him most agreeable to the revealed will of God." They provided for a school in each town, a grammar-school in each county, and a university in the state. All officers, alike executive and legislative, were to be chosen annually and by ballot; the freemen of every town and all one-year's residents were electors. Every member of the house of representatives must declare "his belief in one God, the rewarder of the good and the punisher of the wicked; in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures; and in the Protestant religion." The legislative power was vested in one general assembly, subject to no veto, though an advisory power was given to a board consisting of the governor, lieutenant-governor, and twelve councillors. Slavery was forbidden expressly and for ever; and there could be no imprisonment for debt. Once in seven years an elective council of censors was to take care that freedom and the constitution were preserved in purity. 1777.

The marked similarity of this system to that of Pennsylvania is ascribed in part to the influence of Thomas Young

of Philadelphia, who had published an address to the people of Vermont. After the loss of Ticonderoga, its introduction was postponed, lest the process of change should interfere with the public defence; and the Vermont council of safety despatched supplicatory letters for aid to the New Hampshire committee at Exeter and to Massachusetts.

1777. On the night of the sixth, Fraser and his party made their bivouac seventeen miles from the lake, with that of Riedesel three miles in their rear. At three in the morning of the seventh, both detachments were in motion. The savages having discovered the rear-guard of Saint-Clair's army, which Warner, contrary to his instructions, had encamped for the night at Hubbardton, six miles short of Castleton, Fraser, at five, ordered his troops to advance. To their great surprise, Warner, who was nobly assisted by Colonel Eben Francis and his New Hampshire regiment, turned and began the attack. The English were like to be worsted, when Riedesel with his vanguard and company of yagers came up, their music playing, the men singing a battle-hymn. Francis for a third time charged at the head of his regiment, and held his enemies at bay till he fell. On the approach of the three German battalions, his men retreated towards the south. Fraser, taking Riedesel by the hand, thanked him for the timely rescue. Of the Americans, few were killed, and most of those engaged in the fight made good their retreat; but during the day the British took more than two hundred stragglers, wounded men, and invalids. Of the Brunswickers twenty-two were killed or wounded, of the British one hundred and fifty-five. The heavy loss stopped the pursuit; and Saint-Clair, with two thousand excellent continental troops, marched unmolested to Fort Edward.

The British regiment which chased the fugitives from Whitehall took ground within a mile of Fort Ann. On the morning of the eighth, its garrison drove them nearly three miles, took a captain and three privates, and inflicted a loss of at least fifty in killed and wounded. Re-enforced by a brigade, the English returned only to find the fort burned down, and the garrison beyond reach.

Burgoyne chose to celebrate these events by a day of thanksgiving; but the spirit of the Americans was alarming, while the loss of men in the two engagements, and by bad food and camping out in all weathers, could ill be borne. Another disappointment awaited him. He asked Carleton to hold Ticonderoga with a part of the three thousand troops left in Canada; Carleton, pleading his instructions, which confined him to his own province, unexpectedly refused, and left Burgoyne "to drain the life-blood of his army" for the garrison. Again, supplies of provisions came tardily. Of the Canadian horses contracted for, not more than one third were brought in good condition over the wild mountain roads. The wagons were made of green wood, and, moreover, were deficient in number. Further, Burgoyne should have turned back from Whitehall, and moved to the Hudson River by way of Lake George and the old road; but the word was: "Britons never recede;" and after the halt of a fortnight he took the short cut to Fort Edward, through a wilderness bristling with woods, broken by numerous creeks, and treacherous with morasses. In his letters he dwells with complacency on the construction of more than forty bridges, a "log-work" over a morass two miles in extent, and the removal of layers of fallen timber-trees. But this persistent toil in the heat of midsummer, among myriads of insects, dispirited his troops; and his boastings only show the stupendous folly of the British cabinet in sending the main re-enforcement of Howe's army by a sea voyage to Quebec, and a march through the woods and swamps of a wilderness.

Early in July, Burgoyne confessed to Germain that, 1777.
"were the Indians left to themselves, enormities too horrid to think of would ensue; guilty and innocent, women and infants, would be a common prey." The general, nevertheless, resolved to use them as instruments of "terror," and promised, after arriving at Albany, to send them "towards Connecticut and Boston," knowing full well that they were actually left to themselves by La Corne Saint-Luc, their leader, who was impatient of control in the use of the scalping-knife. Every day the savages brought in scalps

as well as prisoners. On the twenty-seventh, Jane Maccrea, a young woman of twenty, betrothed to a loyalist in the British service and esteeming herself under the protection of British arms, was riding from Fort Edward to the British camp at Sandy Hill, escorted by two Indians. The Indians quarrelled about the reward promised on her safe arrival, and at a half-mile from Fort Edward one of them sunk his tomahawk in her skull. The incident was not of unusual barbarity; but this massacre of a betrothed girl on her way to her lover touched the hearts of all who heard the story. Burgoyne threatened the assassin with death, but pardoned him from fear of "the total defection of the Indians."

Meantime, the British were never harried by the troops with Schuyler, against whom public opinion was rising. Men reasoned rightly, that, if Ticonderoga was untenable, he should have known it, and given timely orders for its evacuation; instead of which, he had been heaping up stores there to the last. To screen his popularity, he insisted that the retreat was made without the least hint from himself, and was "ill-judged and not warranted by necessity." With manly frankness Saint-Clair assumed the responsibility of the praiseworthy act which had saved to the country many of its bravest defenders.

1777.

Schuyler owed his place to his social position, not to military talents. Anxious, and suspected of a want of personal courage, he found every thing go ill under his command. To the continental troops of Saint-Clair, who were suffering from the loss of their clothes and tents, he was unable to restore confidence; nor could he rouse the people. The choice for governor of New York fell on George Clinton; "his character," said Washington to the council of safety, "will make him peculiarly useful at the head of your state." Schuyler, who owned that "he was virtuous and loved his country," and deprecated "divisions" in consequence of his choice, wrote: "His family and connections do not entitle him to so distinguished a pre-eminence." The aid of Vermont was needed; Schuyler would never address its secretary except in his "private

capacity." There could be no hope of a successful campaign but with the hearty co-operation of New England; yet Schuyler gave leave for one half of its militia to go home at once, and the rest to follow in three weeks, and then called upon Washington to supply their places by troops from the south of Hudson River, saying to his friends that one southern soldier was worth two from New England.

On the twenty-second, long before Burgoyne was ready to advance, Schuyler retreated to a position four miles below Fort Edward. Here again he complained of his "exposure to immediate ruin." His friends urged him to silence the growing suspicion of his cowardice; he answered: "If there is a battle, I shall certainly expose myself more than is prudent." To the New York council of safety he wrote on the twenty-fourth: "I mean to dispute every inch of ground with Burgoyne, and retard his descent as long as possible;" and in less than a week, without disputing any thing, he retreated to Saratoga, having his heart set on a position at the junction of the Mohawk and Hudson. The courage of the commander being gone, his officers and his army became spiritless; and, as his only resource, he solicited aid from Washington with unreasoning importunity. 1777.

The loss of Ticonderoga alarmed the patriots of New York, gladdened the royalists, and fixed the wavering Indians as enemies. Five counties were in the possession of the enemy; three others suffered from disunion and anarchy; Tryon county implored immediate aid; the militia of Westchester were absorbed in their own defence; in the other counties, scarcely men enough remained at home to secure the plentiful harvest. Menaced on its border from the Susquehannah to Lake Champlain, and on every part of the Hudson, New York became the battle-field for the life of the young republic; it had crying need of help; its council accepted Schuyler's excuses, and seconded his prayers for re-enforcements.

As commander in chief of all the armies of America, Washington watched with peculiar care over the northern department; in the plan of the campaign, he had assigned

it more than its share of troops and resources; and he added one brigade which was beyond the agreement, and of which he stood in pressing need, for the army of Howe was twice or thrice as numerous as that from Canada. In this time of perplexity, when the country from the Hudson to Maryland required to be guarded, the entreaties from Schuyler, from the council of New York, and from Jay and Gouverneur Morris as deputies of that council, poured in upon Washington. Alarmed by Schuyler's want of fortitude, he ordered to the north Arnold, who was fearless, and Lincoln, who was acceptable to the militia of the eastern states. Beside those generals, he sent, even though it weakened his own army irretrievably, still one more brigade of excellent continental troops under Glover. To hasten the rising of New England, he wrote directly to the brigadier-generals of Massachusetts and Connecticut, urging them to march for Saratoga with at least one third part of the militia under their command. At the same time he bade Schuyler "never despair," explaining that the forces which might advance under Burgoyne could not much exceed five thousand men; that they must garrison every fortified post left behind them; that their progress must be delayed by their baggage and artillery, and by the necessity of cutting out new roads and clearing old ones; that a party should be stationed in Vermont to keep them in continual anxiety for their rear; that Arnold should go to the relief of Fort Stanwix; that, if the invaders continued to act in detachments, one vigorous fall upon some one of those detachments might prove fatal to the whole expedition.

1777. In a like spirit, he expressed to the council of New York "the most sensible pleasure at the exertions of the state, dismembered as it was, and under every discouragement and disadvantage;" the success of Burgoyne, he predicted, would be temporary; the southern states could not be asked to detail their force, since it was all needed to keep Howe at bay; the attachment of the eastern states to the cause insured their activity when invoked for the safety of a sister state, of themselves, of the continent; the worst effect of the loss of Ticonderoga was the panic which it pro-

duced; calmly considered, the expedition was not formidable; if New York should be seasonably seconded by its eastern neighbors, Burgoyne would find it equally difficult to advance or to retreat.

All this while Schuyler continued to despond. On the thirteenth of August he could write from Stillwater to Washington: "We are obliged to give way and retreat before a vastly superior force, daily increasing in numbers, and which will be doubled if General Burgoyne reaches Albany, which I apprehend will be very soon;" and the next day, flying from a shadow, he moved his army to the first island in the mouth of the Mohawk River. He pitied the man who should succeed him, and accepted applause at Albany for "the wisdom of his safe retreat." The glory of the defeat of Burgoyne was reserved for soldiers of Virginia, New York, and New England. The first blow was struck by the husbandmen of Tryon county. 1777.

Burgoyne, on his return to London in 1776, played the sycophant to Germain by censuring Carleton for not having used the Oswego and Mohawk Rivers for an auxiliary expedition, which he had offered to lead. Germain adopted the plan, and settled the details for its execution chiefly by savages. To Carleton, whom he accused of being "resolved to avoid employing Indians," he announced the king's "resolution that every means should be employed that Providence had put in his majesty's hand for crushing the rebellion." The savages were, moreover, to be committed to more indulgent officers than Carleton had approved.

And now Burgoyne was himself to forward the movement of which he was confident that the dread would scatter the American army and open an unobstructed way to Albany. The force under Saint-Leger, varying from the schedule of Germain in its constituent parts more than in its numbers, exceeded seven hundred and fifty white men. "The Six Nations inclined to the rebels" from fear of being finally abandoned by the king. The Mohawks could not rise, unless they were willing to leave their old hunting-grounds; the Oneidas were friendly to the Americans; even the Senecas were hard to be roused. Butler at Iron-

dequat assured them that there was no hindrance in the war-path; that they would have only to look on and see Fort Stanwix fall; and for seven days he lavished largesses on the fighting men and on their wives and children, till "they accepted the hatchet." "Not much short of one thousand Indian warriors," certainly "more than eight hundred," joined the white brigade of Saint-Leger. In addition to these, Hamilton, the lieutenant-governor of Detroit, in obedience to orders from the secretary of state, sent out fifteen several parties, consisting in the aggregate of two hundred and eighty-nine red braves with thirty white officers and rangers, to prowl on the frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia.

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Collecting his forces as he advanced from Montreal by way of Oswego, Saint-Leger on the third of August came near the carrying-place, where for untold ages the natives had borne their bark canoes over the narrow plain that divides the waters of the St. Lawrence from those of the Hudson. He found a well-constructed fortress, safe by earthworks against his artillery, and garrisoned by six or seven hundred men under Lieutenant-colonel Gansevoort. A messenger from Brant's sister brought word that Herkimer and the militia of Tryon county were marching to its relief. A plan was made to lay an ambush of savages for this party, which encamped on the fifth at a distance of twelve miles. During the evening the savages filled the woods with yells. The next morning, having carefully laid aside their blankets and robes of fur, the whole corps of Indians went out, naked, or clad only in hunting-shirts, armed with spear, tomahawk, and musket, and supported by Sir John Johnson and some part of his royal Yorkers, by Colonel Butler and his rangers, by Claus and his Canadians, and by Lieutenant Bird and a party of regulars.

The patriot freeholders of the Mohawk valley, most of them with their officers the offspring of Germans from the palatinate, seven or eight hundred in number, misinformed as to the strength of the besieging party, marched through the wood with careless security. About an hour before noon, when they were within six miles of the fort,

their van entered the ambuscade. They were surprised in front by Johnson and his Yorkers, while the Indians attacked their flanks with fury, and after using their muskets rushed in with their tomahawks. The patriots fell back without confusion to better ground, and renewed the fight against superior numbers. There was no chance for tactics in this battle of the wilderness. Small parties fought from behind trees or fallen logs; or the white man, born on the banks of the Mohawk, wrestled single-handed with the Seneca warrior, like himself the child of the soil, mutually striking mortal wounds with the bayonet or the hatchet, and falling in the forest, "their left hands clenched in each other's hair, their right grasping in a gripe of death the knife plunged in each other's bosom." Herkimer was badly wounded below the knee; but he remained on the ground, giving orders to the end. Thomas Spencer died the death of a hero. The battle raged for at least an hour and a half, when the Americans repulsed their assailants, but with the loss of about one hundred and sixty killed, wounded, and taken, the best and bravest people of Western New York. The savages fought with wild valor; three-and-thirty or more of their warriors, among them the chief warriors of the Senecas, lay dead beneath the trees; about as many more were badly wounded. Of the Yorkers one captain, of the rangers two were killed; another was left for dead on the field. What number of privates fell is not told. The British loss, including savages and white men, was probably about one hundred. 1777.

Three men having crossed the morass into Fort Stanwix to announce the approach of Herkimer, by Gansevoort's order two hundred and fifty men, half of New York, half of Massachusetts, under Lieutenant-colonel Marinus Willett, made a sally in the direction of Oriska. They passed through the quarters of the Yorkers, the rangers, and the savages, driving before them whites and Indians, chiefly squaws and children, capturing Sir John Johnson's papers, five British flags, the gala fur-robes and the new blankets and kettles of the Indians, and four prisoners. Learning from them the check to Herkimer, the party of Willett re-

turned quickly to Fort Stanwix, bearing their spoils on their shoulders. The five captured colors were displayed under the continental flag. It was the first time that a captured banner had floated under the stars and stripes of the republic. The Indians were frantic with grief at the death of their chiefs and warriors; they suffered in the chill nights from the loss of their clothes; and not even the permission in which they were indulged of torturing and killing their captives could prevent their beginning to return home.

1777. Meantime, Willett, with Lieutenant Stockwell as his companion, "both good woodsmen," made their way past the Indian quarter at the hazard of death by torture, to ask relief for the garrison; and Arnold was charged with an expedition for that purpose. Long before its approach, an Indian ran into camp, reporting that a thousand men were coming against them; another followed, doubling the number; a third brought a rumor that three thousand men were close at hand; and, deaf to Saint-Leger and to their superintendents, the wild warriors robbed the British officers of their clothes, plundered the boats, and made off with the booty. Saint-Leger in a panic, though Arnold was not within forty miles, hurried after them before nightfall, leaving his tents standing, and abandoning most of his artillery and stores.

It was "Herkimer who," in the opinion of Washington, "first reversed the gloomy scene" of the northern campaign. The hero of the Mohawk valley "served from love of country, not for reward. He did not want a continental command or money." Before congress had decided how to manifest their gratitude, he died of his wound; and they decreed him a monument. Gansevoort was rewarded by a vote of thanks and a command; Willett, by public praise and "an elegant sword."

The employment of Indian allies had failed. The king, the ministry, and, in due time, the British parliament, were informed officially that the wild red men "treacherously committed ravages upon their friends;" that "they could not be controlled;" that "they killed their captives after

the fashion of their tribes;" that "there was infinite difficulty to manage them;" that "they grew more and more unreasonable and importunate." Could the government of a civilized state insist on courting their alliance? When the Seneca warriors, returning to their lodges, told the story of the slaughter of their chiefs, their villages rung with the howls of mourners, the yells of rage. We shall see interested British emissaries, acting under the orders of Germain and the king, make the life of these savages a succession of deeds of revenge, and lead them to wreak all their wrath in blood.

Burgoyne, who on the thirtieth of July had his head-quarters on the banks of the Hudson, was proud of his management of the Indians, of whom he had detachments from seventeen nations. A Brunswick officer describes them as "tall, warlike, and enterprising, but fiendishly wicked, man-eaters, or certainly, in their fury, capable of unfleshing an enemy with their teeth." On the third of August they brought in twenty scalps and as many captives; and Burgoyne approved their incessant activity. To prevent desertions, it was announced in orders to each regiment that the savages were enjoined to scalp every runaway. The Ottawas longed to go home; but on the fifth of August, nine days after the murder of Jane MacCrea, Burgoyne took from all his red warriors a pledge to stay through the campaign. On the sixth he reported himself to General Howe as "well forward," "impatient to gain the mouth of the Mohawk," but not likely to "be in possession of Albany" before "the twenty-second or the twenty-third" of the month. 1777.

To aid Saint-Leger by a diversion, and fill his camp with draught cattle, horses, and provisions from the fabled magazines at Bennington, Burgoyne on the eleventh of August sent out an expedition on the left, commanded by Baum, a Brunswick lieutenant-colonel of dragoons, and composed of more than four hundred Brunswickers, Hanau artillerists with two cannon, the select corps of British marksmen, a party of French Canadians, a more numerous party of provincial royalists, and a horde of about one hundred and fifty

Indians. The general in his eagerness rode after Baum, and gave him verbal orders to march directly upon Bennington. After disposing of the stores at that place, he might cross the Green Mountains, descend the Connecticut River to Brattleborough, and enter Albany with Saint-Leger and the main army. The night of the thirteenth, he encamped about four miles from Bennington, on a hill that rises from the Walloomscoick, just within the state of New York. When, early on the morning of the fourteenth, a reconnoitring party of Americans was seen, he wrote in high spirits for more troops, and constructed strong intrenchments. Burgoyne sent him orders to maintain his
1777. post; and, at eight o'clock on the fifteenth, Breymann, a Brunswick lieutenant-colonel, marched with two Brunswick battalions and two cannon, in a constant rain, through thick woods, to his support.

The supplicatory letter from Vermont to the New Hampshire committee of safety reached Exeter just after the session of the legislature; but its members came together again on the seventeenth of July, promptly resolved to cooperate "with the troops of the new state," and ordered Stark, with a brigade of militia, "to stop the progress of the enemy on their western frontier."

Uprising at the call, the men of New Hampshire flew to his standard, which he set up at Charlestown on the Connecticut River. Taking no heed of Schuyler's orders to join the retreating army, for which disobedience that general brought upon him the censure of congress, and having consulted with Seth Warner of Vermont, Stark made his bivouac on the fourteenth of August at the distance of a mile from the post of Baum, to whom he vainly offered battle. The regiment of Warner came down from Manchester during the rain of the fifteenth; and troops arrived from the westernmost county of Massachusetts.

When the sun rose on the sixteenth, Stark concerted with his officers the plan for the day. Seeing small bands of men, in shirt-sleeves and carrying fowling-pieces without bayonets, steal behind his camp, Baum mistook them for friendly country people placing themselves where he could

protect them; and so five hundred men under Nichols and Herrick united in his rear. While his attention was arrested by a feint, two hundred more posted themselves on his right; and Stark, with two or three hundred, took the front. At three o'clock Baum was attacked on every side. The Indians dashed between two detachments, and fled, leaving their grand chief and other warriors on the field. New England sharpshooters ran up within eight yards of the loaded cannon, to pick off the cannoneers. When, after about two hours, the firing of the Brunswickers slackened from scarcity of powder, the Americans scaled the breastwork and fought them hand to hand. Baum ordered his infantry with the bayonet, his dragoons with their sabres, to force a way; but in the attempt he fell mortally wounded, and his veteran troops surrendered.

Just then the battalions of Breymann, having taken thirty hours to march twenty-four miles, came in sight. Warner now first brought up his regiment, of one hundred and fifty men, into action; and with their aid Stark began a new attack, using the cannon just taken. The fight raged till sunset, when Breymann, abandoning his artillery and most of his wounded men, ordered a retreat. The pursuit continued till night: those who escaped owed their safety to the darkness. During the day less than thirty of the Americans were killed, and about forty were wounded; the loss of their enemy was estimated at full twice as many, besides at least six hundred and ninety-two prisoners, of whom more than four hundred were Germans. 1777.

This victory, one of the most brilliant and eventful of the war, was achieved spontaneously by the husbandmen of New Hampshire, Vermont, and Western Massachusetts. Stark only confirms the reports of German officers when he writes: "Had our people been Alexanders or Charleses of Sweden, they could not have behaved better."

At the news of Breymann's retreat, the general ordered his army under arms; and at the head of the forty-seventh regiment he forded the Battenkill, to meet the worn-out fugitives. The loss of troops was irreparable. Many of the Canadians deserted; the Indians of the remote nations

began to leave in disgust. For supplies, Burgoyne was thrown back upon shipments from England, painfully forwarded from Quebec by way of Lake Champlain and
1777. Lake George to the Hudson River. Before he could move forward, he must, with small means of transportation, bring together stores for thirty days, and drag nearly two hundred boats over two long carrying-places.

Burgoyne's campaign had proceeded as foreshadowed by Washington; yet the anxious care of congress concentred itself there. On the first of August, it relieved Schuyler from command by a vote to which there was no negative; and on the fourth eleven states elected Gates his successor. Before he assumed the command, Fort Stanwix was safe and the victory of Bennington achieved; yet it hastened to vote him all the powers and all the aid which Schuyler in his moods of despondency had entreated. Touched by the ringing appeals of Washington, thousands of the men of Massachusetts, even from the counties of Middlesex and Essex, were in motion towards Saratoga. Congress, overriding Washington's advice, gave Schuyler's successor plenary power to make requisitions for additional numbers of militia on New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Washington had culled from his troops five hundred riflemen, and formed them under Morgan into the best corps of skirmishers that had ever been attached to an army; congress directed them to be sent immediately to assist Gates against the Indians; and Washington obeyed so promptly that the order might seem to have been anticipated.

As for Schuyler, he soon learned to "justify congress for depriving him of the command, convinced," such are his own words in a letter to a friend, "that it was their duty to sacrifice the feelings of an individual to the safety of the states, when the people who only could defend the country refused to serve under him."

CHAPTER XXIII.

SIR WILLIAM HOWE TAKES PHILADELPHIA.

AUGUST—SEPTEMBER 26, 1777.

THE favor lavished on the new chief of the northern department raised a doubt whether Washington retained authority over him, till congress declared that "they never intended to supersede or circumscribe his power;" but, partly from an unwillingness to own their mistakes, partly from the pride of authority, not unmixed with jealousy of his manifest superior popularity, they did not scruple to slight his advice and to neglect his wants. Though forewarned by him of the hopeless confusion that would ensue, they remodelled the commissary department in the midst of the campaign on a system which had neither unity nor subordination, and which no competent men would undertake to execute. Washington had endeavored to form the heart of his army of national troops, raised and officered directly by the United States: congress, after giving their formal consent, thwarted the scheme by their frowns. The general "used every means in his power to destroy all kinds of state distinction in the army, and to have every part and parcel of it considered as continental:" congress, fast yielding to a system of politics founded on the paramount sovereignty of the several states, more and more reserved to their separate constituencies the business of recruiting and the appointment of all but general officers; and, as these followed different modes in their levies and their appointments, there was no unity in the camp. Political considerations had controlled the nomination of officers, of whom nearly all were inexperienced, many unteachable, and some of untried courage; but congress had

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not vigor enough to drop the incapable, and in their frugality expected that every one of them would be employed. The confusion was made worse by the numerous commissions to foreign adventurers, who thronged to the commander in chief with extravagant pretensions, and made the army "a just representation of a great chaos." "The wearisome wrangles between military officers scrambling for rank" drew members of congress into cabals. A reacting "spirit of reformation" was at first equally undiscerning; Kalb and Lafayette, arriving at Philadelphia near the end of July, met a rude repulse. When it was told that Lafayette desired no more than leave to risk his life in the cause of liberty without pension or allowance, congress gave him the rank of major-general; but the offers of Kalb, the ablest European officer who had come over, master of the English language, and familiar with the country, were declined.

1777. At this critical moment, the army of Washington was grievously weakened by Sullivan. That officer, who was stationed with his division at Hanover in New Jersey, that he might move rapidly to the Hudson or to Philadelphia, planned the surprise of some Jersey loyalists encamped on Staten Island. Ogden, with a company under Frelinghuysen and two regiments, landed from three boats to the south of Freshkills; and, though a man-of-war in New York Bay fired alarm-cannon, he captured more than eighty men, drove the fugitives to intrenchments near Prince's Bay, and returned seasonably with his prisoners. Sullivan, who at two in the afternoon of the twenty-first of August left Hanover with one thousand picked men, during the following night crossed from Elizabethport to Staten Island. Before day he divided his force, sending one part of it in the direction of what is now New Brighton, and leading the other towards Freshkills. On his march, he dragged off eight-and-twenty tory civilians, picked up as many more stragglers, and searched the houses of Quakers, where he found papers, which, when transmitted to congress, caused the exile of a few Pennsylvanians to Virginia; but he "missed the opportunity of reaping decided advantages."

Time was lost in reuniting his corps; and, when British and German regiments came near, his rear-guard was left behind to be captured. By this ill-timed and ill-conducted expedition, Sullivan lost about two hundred of his very best troops, and so fatigued those who escaped that he could not obey the orders which met him on his return, to join Washington with all speed. 1777.

Leaving more than seven regiments in Rhode Island, and about six thousand men under Sir Henry Clinton at New York, Howe began on the fifth of July to embark the main body of his army for a joint expedition with the naval force against Philadelphia. The troops, alike foot and cavalry, waited on shipboard in the stifling heat till the twenty-third, for their indolent general. The fleet of nearly three hundred sail spent seven days in beating from Sandy Hook to the capes of Delaware. On the report that the river was obstructed, it went for the Chesapeake, laveering against the stiff southerly winds of the season. August was half gone when it turned Cape Charles; then, ascending the bay, and passing Annapolis, of which the little guard hung out its banner, on the twenty-fifth, after a voyage of thirty-three days, it anchored in Elk River, six miles below Elk-town and fifty-four miles from Philadelphia.

Expressing the strange judgments and opinions of many of his colleagues, John Adams could write: "We shall rake and scrape enough to do Howe's business; the continental army under Washington is more numerous by several thousands than Howe's whole force; the enemy give out that they are eighteen thousand strong, but we know better, and that they have not ten thousand. Washington is very prudent; I should put more to risk, were I in his shoes; but perhaps he is right. Gansevoort has proved that it is possible to hold a post, and Stark that it is practicable even to attack lines and posts, with militia. I wish the continental army would prove that any thing can be done. I am weary with so much insipidity; I am sick of Fabian systems. My toast is, a short and violent war." Now at that time the army of Howe, in excellent health, counted at the lowest statements seventeen thousand one hundred and

sixty-seven men, beside the corps of engineers; or, according to returns in the British department of state, nineteen thousand five hundred effective men, and the officers
1777. amounted to at least one fifth as many more. Officers and men were soldiers by profession, selected from the best of the British empire and of the warlike race of Hesse, and perfectly equipped.

Congress gave itself the air of efficiency by calling out the militia of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey; but New Jersey had to watch the force on the Hudson; the slaveholders on the Maryland eastern shore and in the southern county of Delaware were disaffected; the new government in Pennsylvania, which possessed no store of arms and had relaxed its preparations in the confidence that the danger was past, was hateful to a great majority of the inhabitants, and continued to be split by selfish factions even in the presence of the enemy. The number of Pennsylvania militia with Washington did not exceed twelve hundred, and did not increase beyond twenty-five hundred; Mifflin, the quartermaster-general, though a Pennsylvanian, rendered no service whatever. There was no hope of a rising of the people around; and the really effective men under Washington, including militia, volunteers, and the division of Sullivan, were but about eleven thousand five hundred.

Congress never exacted more from Washington, and never gave him less support; but he indulged in no complaint. His army reflected his patriotism, and the presence of enthusiasts from Europe proved to him the good-will of other nations. The young Marquis de Lafayette, received into his family as a volunteer without command, risked life for the rights of man. The Marquis de la Rouerie, at home a sufferer from a misplaced love, called in America Colonel Armand, commanded an independent corps of such recruits as could not speak English. Pulaski, whose eager zeal had wrought no good for his own country, exiled from Poland, now gave himself to the New World.

On the twenty-fourth of August, Washington led his troops, decorated with sprays of green, through the crowded

streets of Philadelphia, to overawe the disaffected; the next day he reached Wilmington just as the British anchored in the Elk with the purpose of marching upon Philadelphia by an easy inland route through an open country which had no difficult passes, no rivers but fordable ones, and was inhabited chiefly by royalists and Quakers. Until Sullivan, after more than a week, brought up his division, the American army, which advanced to the highlands beyond Wilmington, was not more than half as numerous as the British; but Howe from the waste of horses by his long voyage was compelled to wait till others could be seized or purchased.

On the third of September, the two divisions under Cornwallis and Knyphausen began the march towards Philadelphia; by Washington's order, Maxwell and the light troops, composed of drafts of one hundred men from each brigade, occupied Iron Hill, and, after a sharp skirmish in the woods with a body of German yagers who were supported by light infantry, withdrew slowly and in perfect order. For two days longer Howe waited, that he might transfer his wounded men to the hospital-ship of the fleet, and purchase still more means of transportation. Four miles from him, Washington took post behind Red Clay Creek, and invited an attack; encouraging his troops by speeches, by his own bearing, and by spirited general orders. On the eighth, Howe sent a strong column in front of the Americans to feign an attack, while his main army halted at Milltown. The British and Germans were rejoicing over the march so wisely planned, and, as it was believed, so secretly executed, and went to rest in full confidence of turning Washington's right on the morrow, and so cutting him off from the road to Lancaster. But at dawn on the ninth the American army was not to be seen. Washington divined his enemy's purpose, and by a masterly and really secret movement took post on the high grounds above Chad's ford on the north side of the Brandywine, directly in Howe's path. 1777.

Inferior in numbers and in arms, yet bent on earnest work, Washington disembarrassed his troops of their baggage and sent it forward to Chester. A battery of cannon

with a good parapet guarded the ford. The American left, resting on a thick, continuous forest along the Brandywine, which below Chad's ford becomes a rapid encumbered by rocks and shut in by abrupt, high banks, was suffi-
1777. ciently defended by Armstrong and the Pennsylvania militia. On the right, the river was hidden by thick woods and the unevenness of the country; to Sullivan, the first in rank after the general, was assigned the duty of taking "every necessary precaution for the security of that flank;" and the six brigades of his command, consisting of the divisions of Stirling, and of Stephen, and his own, were stationed in echelons along the river.

On the tenth, the two divisions of the British, led respectively by Knyphausen and Cornwallis, formed a junction at Kennet Square. At five the next morning, more than half of Howe's forces, leaving all their baggage even to their knapsacks behind them, and led by trusty guides, marched under the general and Cornwallis up the Great Valley road to cross the Brandywine at its forks. About ten o'clock, Knyphausen with his column, coming upon the river at Chad's ford, seven miles lower down, halted and began a long cannonade, manifesting no purpose of forcing the passage. Washington had "certain" information of the movement of Howe; and therefore resolved to strike at once at the division in his front, which was less than half of the British army, and was encumbered with the baggage of the whole. If nothing more were done, a serious damage to its means of transportation would change the aspect of the campaign. As Washington rode up and down his lines, the loud shouts of his men witnessed their love and confidence, and as he spoke to them in earnest and cheering words they clamored for battle. Sending word to Sullivan to cross the Brandywine at a higher ford, and thus prevent the hasty return of the body with Howe and Cornwallis, while at the same time he would threaten the left flank of Knyphausen, Washington put his troops in motion. Greene with the advance was at the river's edge and about to begin the attack, when a message came from Sullivan, announcing that he had disobeyed his orders, that the

"information on which these orders were founded must be wrong."

The information on which Washington acted was precisely correct; he had made the best possible arrangement for an attack; but the failure of Sullivan overthrew the design, which for success required swiftness of execution. After the loss of two hours, word was brought that the division of Cornwallis had passed the forks, and was coming down with the intent to turn the American right. On the instant Sullivan was ordered to confront the advance. Lord Stirling and Stephen posted their troops in two lines on a rounded eminence south-west of Birmingham meeting-house; while Sullivan, who should have gone to their right, marched his division far beyond their extreme left, leaving a gap of a half-mile between them, so that he could render no service, and was exposed to be cut off. The other general officers, whom he "rode on to consult," explained to him the faultiness of his position, by which the right of his wing was unprotected. Upon this, he undertook to march his division from a half-mile beyond the left to his proper place on the right. The British troops, which beheld this movement as they lay at rest for a full hour after their long march in the hot day, were led to the attack before he could form his line. His division, badly conducted, fled without their artillery, and could not be rallied. Their flight exposed the flank of Stirling and Stephen. These two divisions, only half as numerous as their assailants, in spite of the "unofficerlike behavior" of Stephen, fought in good earnest, using their artillery from a distance, their muskets only when their enemy was within forty paces; but under the charge of the Hessians and British grenadiers, who vied with each other in fury as they ran forward with the bayonet, the American line continued to break from the right. Conway's brigade resisted well; Sullivan, so worthless as a general, showed personal courage; Lafayette, present as a volunteer, though wounded in the leg, while rallying the fugitives, bound up the wound as he could, and kept the field till the close of the battle. The third Virginia regiment, commanded by Marshall and sta-

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tioned apart in a wood, held out till both its flanks were turned and half its officers and one third its men were killed or wounded.

Howe seemed likely to get in the rear of the continental army and complete its overthrow. But at the sound of the cannon on the right, Washington, taking with him Greene and the two brigades of Muhlenberg and Weedon, which lay nearest the scene of action, marched swiftly to the support of the wing that had been confided to Sullivan, and in about forty minutes met them in full retreat. His approach checked the pursuit. Cautiously making a new disposition of his forces, Howe again pushed forward, driving the party with Greene till they came upon a strong position, chosen by Washington, which completely commanded the road, and which a regiment of Virginians under Stevens and another of Pennsylvanians under Stewart were able to hold till nightfall.

In the heat of the engagement, the division with Knyphausen crossed the Brandywine in one body at Chad's ford. The left wing of the Americans, under the command of Wayne, defended their intrenchments against an attack in front; but when, near the close of the day, a strong detachment threatened their rear, they made a well-ordered retreat, and were not pursued.

The battle seemed to be over. Night was falling, when two battalions of British grenadiers under Meadow and Monckton received orders to occupy a cluster of houses on a hill beyond Dilworth. They marched carelessly, the officers with sheathed swords. At fifty paces from the first house they were surprised by a deadly fire from Maxwell's corps, which lay in ambush to cover the American retreat.
1777. The British officers sent for help, but were nearly routed before General Agnew could bring relief. The Americans then withdrew, and darkness ended the contest.

At midnight, Washington from Chester seized the first moment of respite to report to congress his defeat, making no excuses, casting blame on no one, not even alluding to the disparity of forces, but closing with cheering words.

His losses, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, were about one thousand, less rather than more. Except the severely wounded, few prisoners were taken. A howitzer and ten cannon, among them two Hessian field-pieces captured at Trenton, were left on the field. Several of the French officers behaved with great gallantry: Mauduit Du- 1777.
plessis; Lewis de Fleury, whose horse was shot under him and whose merit congress recognised by vote; Lafayette, of whom Washington said to the surgeon: "Take care of him as though he were my son." Pulaski the Pole, who on that day showed the daring of adventure rather than the qualities of a commander, was created a brigadier of cavalry.

The loss of the British army in killed and wounded was at least five hundred and seventy-nine, of whom fifty-eight were officers. Of the Hessian officers Ewald and Wreden received from the elector a military order. Howe showed his usual courage, pressing fearlessly through fire of musketry and cannon. His plan was with his right to employ Washington's left wing, while he should in person turn the American right wing, hurl it down upon the Brandywine, and crush the whole army between his own two divisions. In this he failed. He won the field of battle; but nightfall, the want of cavalry, and the extreme fatigue of his army forbade pursuit.

When Congress heard of the defeat at the Brandywine, it directed Putnam to send forward fifteen hundred continental troops with all possible expedition, and summoned continental troops and militia from Maryland and Virginia. It desired the militia of New Jersey to lend their aid, but they were kept at home by a triple raid of Sir Henry Clinton for cattle. The assembly of Pennsylvania did little, for it was rent by faction; and it chose this moment to supersede nearly all its delegates in congress by new appointments. The people along Howe's route adhered to the king or were passive. Negro slaves uttered prayers for his success, for the opinion among them was "general, that, if the British power should be victorious, all the negro slaves would become free."

Washington, who had marched from Chester to Germantown, after having supplied his men with provisions and forty rounds of cartridge, recrossed the Schuylkill to confront once more the army of Howe, who had been
1777. detained near the Brandywine till he could send his wounded to Wilmington. The two chiefs, equally eager for battle, marched toward Goshen. On the sixteenth, Donop and his yagers, who pressed forward too rapidly, were encountered by Wayne, and narrowly escaped being cut off; but, before the battle became general, a furious rain set in, which continued all the next night; and the American army, from the poor quality of their accoutrements, had their cartridges drenched, so that Washington was obliged to retire to replenish his ammunition.

It was next the purpose of the British to turn Washington's right, so as to cut off his connections and shut him up between the rivers; but he took care to hold the roads to the south as well as to the north and west. Late on the eighteenth, Alexander Hamilton, who was ordered to Philadelphia to secure military stores in public and in private warehouses, gave congress a false alarm; and its members, now few in number, rose from their beds and fled in the night to meet at Lancaster.

When, on the nineteenth, Washington's army passed through the Schuylkill at Parker's ford, Wayne, who was left with a large body of troops to fall upon any detached party of Howe's army, or to destroy its baggage, wrote chidingly to Washington: "There never was, there never will be, a finer opportunity of giving the enemy a fatal blow; Howe knows nothing of my situation; I have taken every precaution to prevent any intelligence getting to him, at the same time keeping a watchful eye on his front, flanks, and rear." On the night following the twentieth, Wayne had called up his men to make a junction with Maxwell, just as Major-general Grey of the British army, with three regiments, broke in upon them by surprise, and, using the bayonet only, killed, wounded, or took at least three hundred. Darkness and Wayne's presence of mind saved his cannon and the rest of his troops.

The loss was heavy to bear, and opened the way to Philadelphia. John Adams blamed Washington without stint for having crossed to the eastern side of the Schuylkill: "It is a very injudicious manœuvre. If he had sent one brigade of his regular troops to have headed the militia, he might have cut to pieces Howe's army in attempting to cross any of the fords. Howe will not attempt it. He will wait for his fleet in Delaware River. O Heaven, grant us one great soul! One leading mind would extricate the best cause from that ruin which seems to await it." 1777.

While John Adams was writing, Howe moved down the valley, and encamped along the Schuylkill from Valley Forge to French Creek. There were many fords on the rapid river, which in those days flowed at its will. On the twenty-second, a small party of Howe's army forced the passage at Gordon's ford. The following night and morning, the main body of the British army crossed at Fatland ford near Valley Forge, and encamped with its left to the Schuylkill. Congress disguised its impotence by voting Washington power to change officers under brigadiers, and by inviting him to support his army upon the country around him. He was too weak to risk a battle; nor could he by swift marches hang on his enemy's rear, for more than a thousand of his men were barefoot. Rejoined by Wayne, and strengthened by a thousand Marylanders under Smallwood, he sent a peremptory order to Putnam, who was wildly planning attacks on Staten Island, Paulus Hook, New York, and Long Island, to forward a detachment of twenty-five hundred men "with the least possible delay," and to draw his remaining forces together, so that with aid from the militia of New York and Connecticut "the passes in the Highlands might be perfectly secure." Knowing the very great relative superiority of the northern army in numbers, he requested Gates to return the corps of Morgan, being resolved, if he could but be properly seconded, to force the army of Howe to retreat or capitulate before winter.

On the twenty-fifth, that army encamped at Germantown;

and the next morning Cornwallis, with the grenadiers, took possession of Philadelphia.

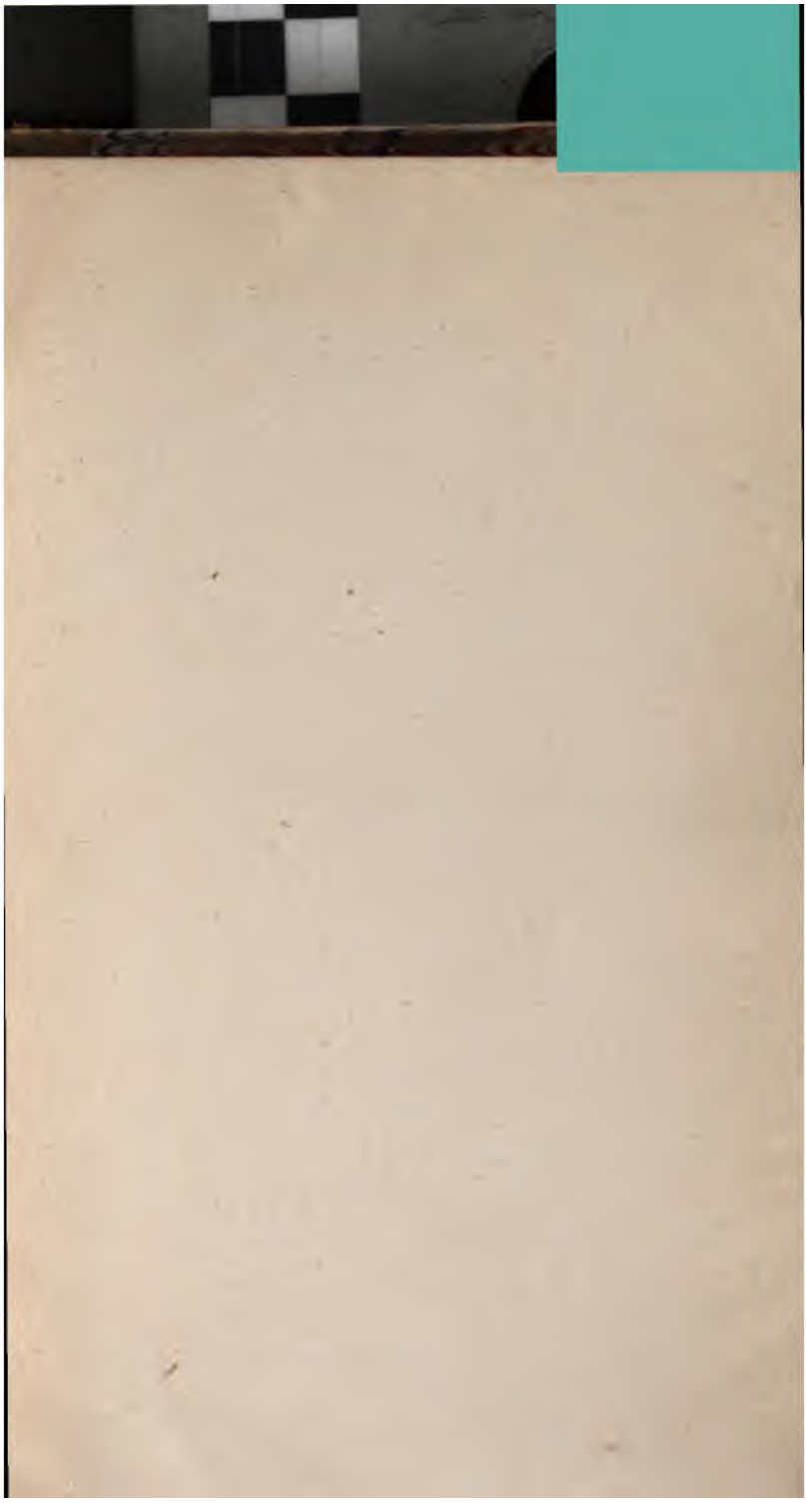
The course of the campaign decided the result at the north. Howe was to have taken Philadelphia in time to send aid to Burgoyne; but Washington, though he 1777. had bared himself of his best troops, had with an inferior force detained him thirty days on a march of fifty-four miles, and it was now too late for him to fulfil his instructions.

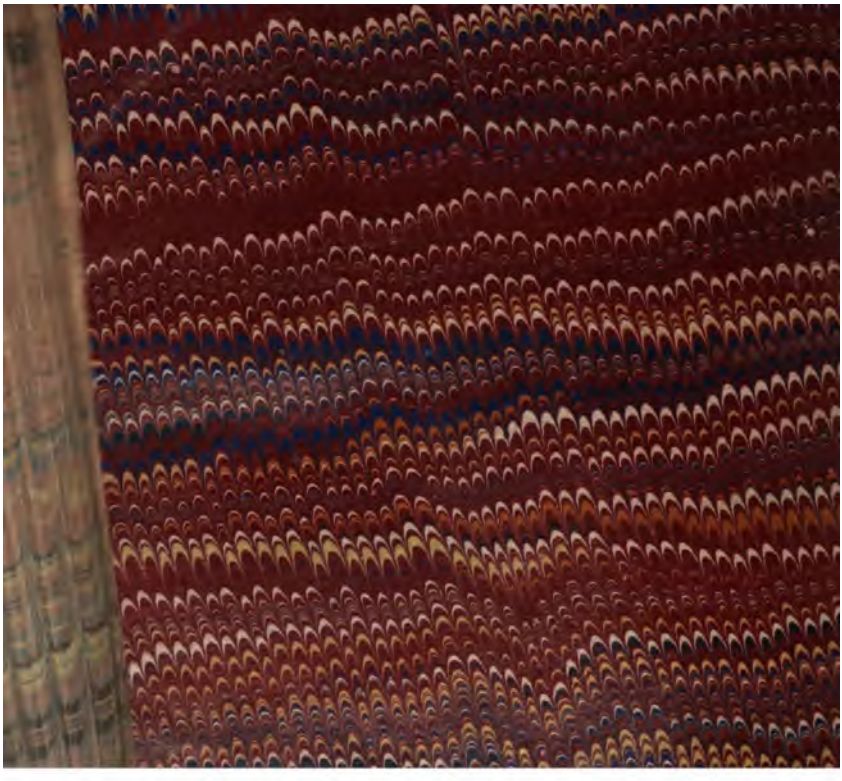
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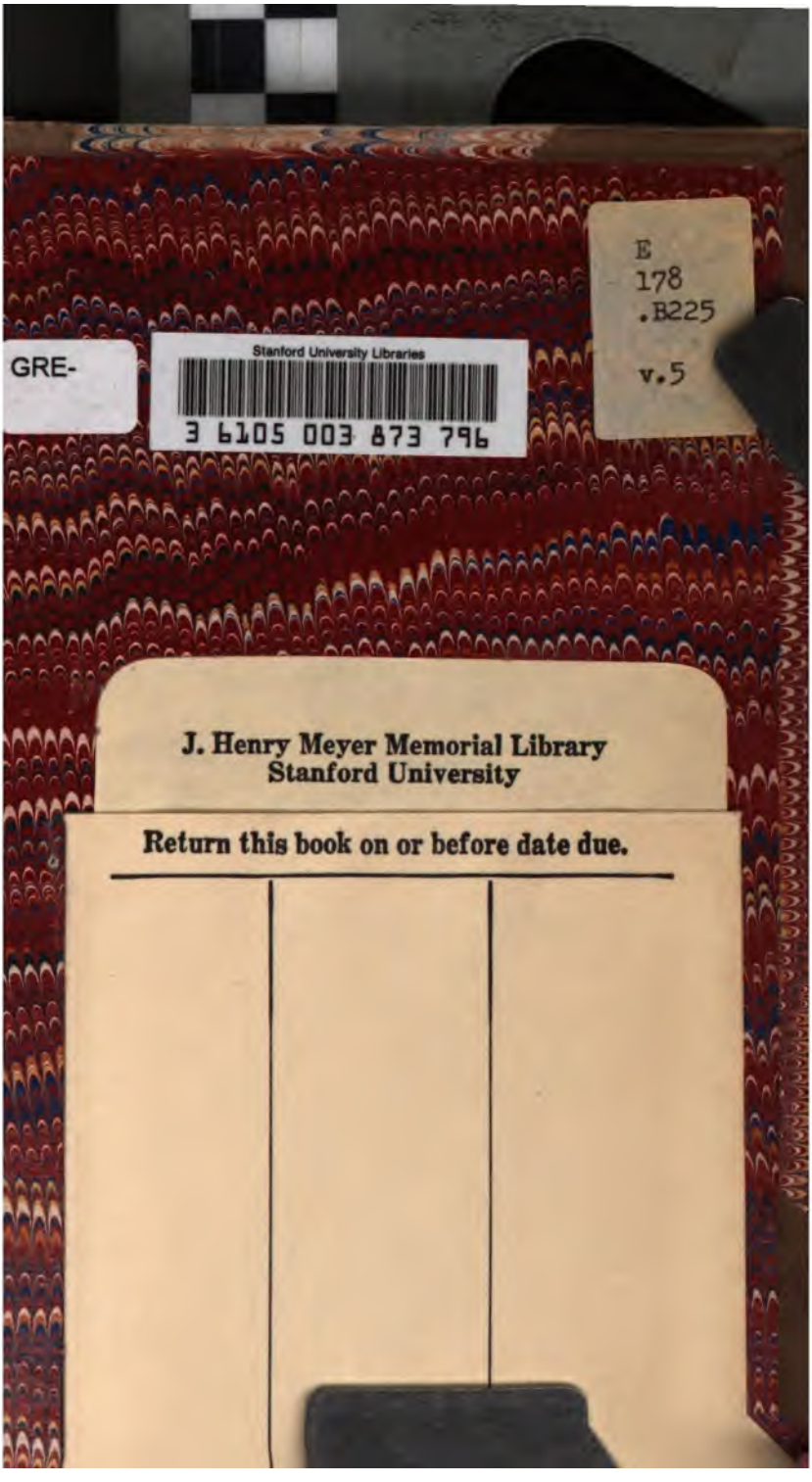
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